THE START-UP SPECIAL

NOVEMBER 2012 | #133 £4 / €7 / $13
WWW.DEVELOP-ONLINE.NET

develop

GAME DESIGN | CODING | ART | SOUND | BUSINESS

START YOUR OWN STUDIO

A HOW-TO GUIDE FOR SETTING UP YOUR OWN STUDIO, WITH ADVICE ON...

FINANCE • BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT • SELF-PUBLISHING • RECRUITMENT

IP LAW • HR • CREATIVITY • TAX RELIEF • ACCELERATORS • CROWDFUNDING

INDUSTRY EXPERTS FROM ACROSS THE GLOBE SHARE THEIR SECRETS FOR SUCCESS

kumolumo.com
kumo lumo
クラウド 光輝
BLITZ
chillingo
Available on the App Store

with 180 million Arabs
under the age of 25*…

…the gaming industry is set to
boom in the Arab world.

twofour54° Abu Dhabi – the tax-free gateway to a new world of gamers.

The MENA region is one of the world's fastest growing media and entertainment markets with 19% growth in recent years. And with 80% of under-25s owning mobile phones,* strong broadband take-up and new gaming innovations, it's a prime opportunity for gaming businesses. Over 100 leading media companies are already capitalising on the opportunity at **twofour54° Abu Dhabi**.

- 100% company ownership in a stable, tax-free environment
- Guidance and liaison with UAE content regulatory bodies
- Easy licensing and business set-up services
- Dedicated fund for mobile apps development via Apps Arabia™
- Unique campus environment with facilitated business networking
- **twofour54°** gaming academy in partnership with Ubisoft®
- The region's only stereoscopic 3D Lab
- Full on-site HD production and post-production facilities

Find out how we could help grow your business today.

twofour54.com/gaming
+9712 401 **2454**

twofour54°
Abu Dhabi
media & entertainment hub

**Sources: Arab Media Outlook 2010. Media on the Move 2009. A.T. Kearney. Introduction to Gaming. Michael Moore. Screen Digest. IDC.*

twofour54° is an initiative of the Abu Dhabi Government.

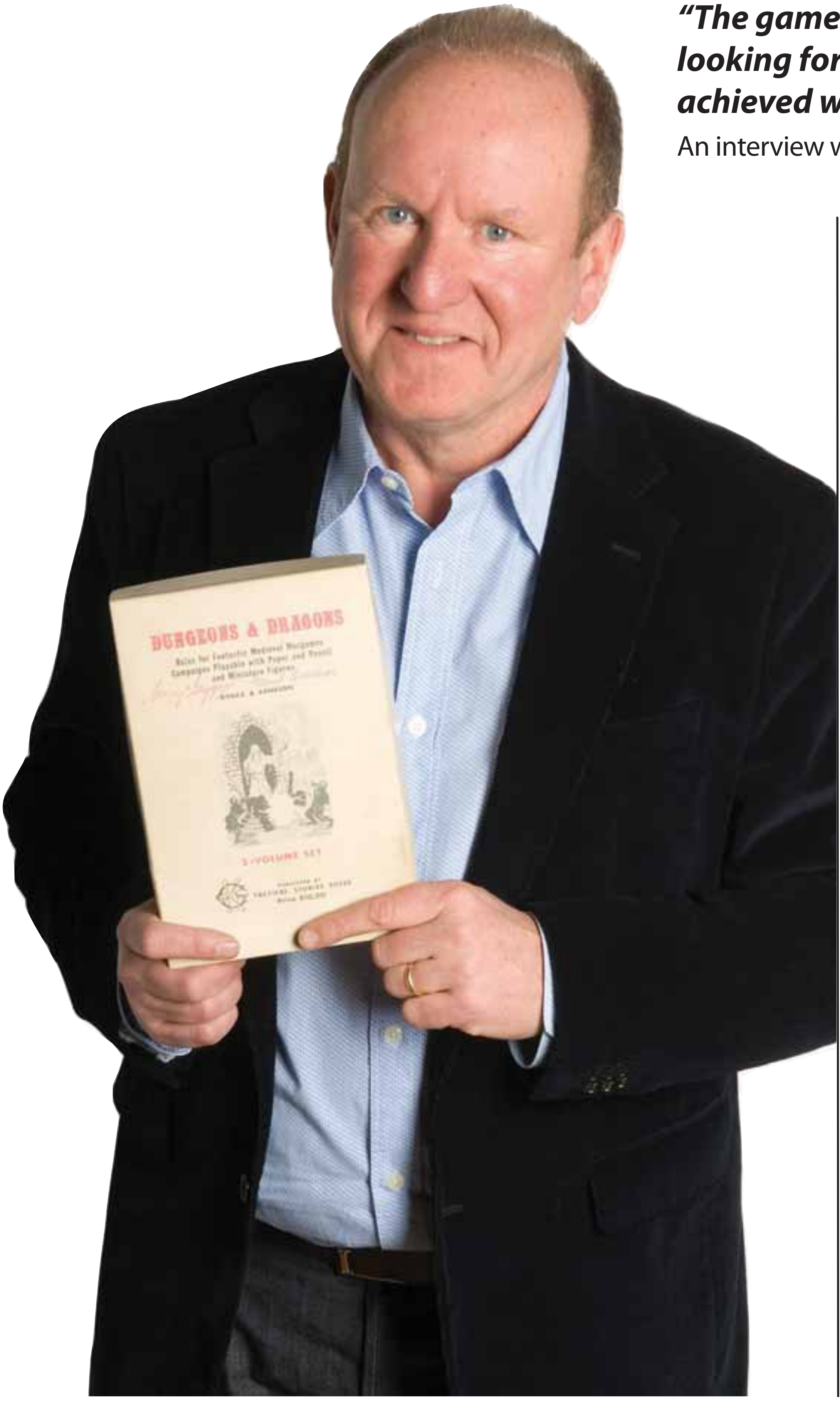
develop
GAME DESIGN | CODING | ART | SOUND | BUSINESS

CREDIT WHERE IT'S DUE

IAN LIVINGSTONE ON INDUSTRY PRIDE

"The games industry has been inward looking for far too long. What we've achieved we should be very proud of."

An interview with an icon, **page 74**



START YOUR OWN STUDIO

A range of experts give essential advice on every element of setting up your own company

JOURNODEVSWAP

Games makers and journalists swap roles for 48 hours of enlightening game jamming

BODY BUILDERS

An in-depth analysis of the newest charcater animation tools, techniques and theories

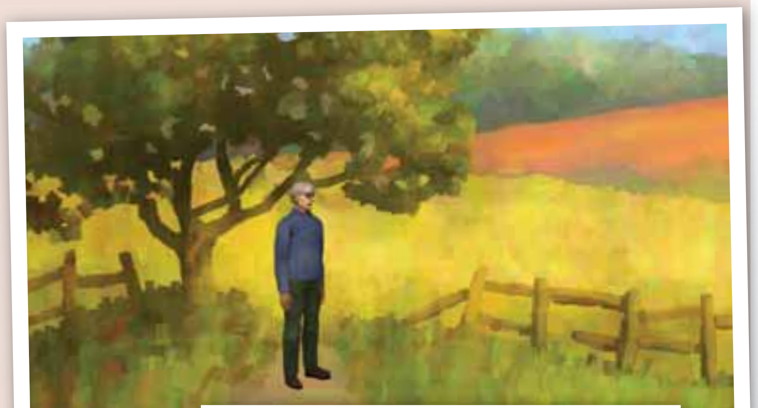
Contents

DEVELOP ISSUE 133 NOVEMBER 2012

ALPHA

06

KICKSTARTER UK IS HERE
The crowdfunding platform is finally accepting UK-based projects. Studios tell us what the news means for them



08

OFFICE SPACE
The Creative Assembly on kitting out your studio to make it work

11

TAKING CONTROL
As part of our special issue Ana Kronschnabl ponders the start-up challenge

12

THE CONSOLE RACE
Nick Gibson pours through the figures, looking at the last furlong as this console generation enters its last lap

13

MOBILE MARKETING
Will Luton on how to accumulate more and speculate less when sharing your game with the world

BETA

21 - 29

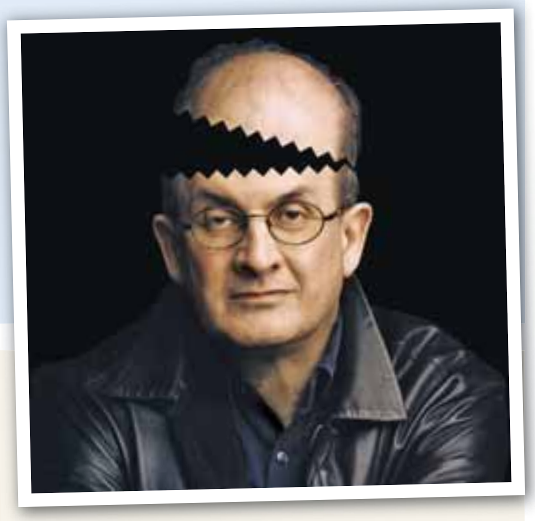
START YOUR OWN STUDIO
Industry experts tell you how to go it alone with your own company

35 - 36

MAKING A WISH
New studio Wish has just secured a huge deal with Sony. We talk to the team about the company's creative culture

41 - 47

BOOMING BRAZIL
We take a trip to Latin America, where a vital emerging market is reaching the tipping point that will make Brazil's dev scene globally significant



CODA

72 **A SIDEWAYS LOOK AT GAMES**
Salman Rushdie, iPad minis, Tweets and the *Develop* Dictionary

> ***"Although Brazil may be viewed internationally as a place where everyone likes to party all the time, we are very hardworking people."***
> *Werther Azevedo, Nano Games, page 41*

BUILD

48 - 51

CHARACTER ANIMATION

A special focus on the cutting-edge of in-game characters

56

AN UNREAL PLANET

A look at the role UE3 played in bringing *Lost Planet 3* to life

58

UNITY AND THE WII U DEAL

The engine maker details its new agreement with the industry giant

59

FABLED SOUNDS

The team behind the score of *Fable: The Journey* explain how they tackled the project

develop 61 - 71
DIRECTORY
STUDIOS, TOOLS, SERVICES AND COURSES

EDITORIAL

START TODAY

Why, you might ask, is *Develop* doing a special issue focused on advice for start-ups? The global economy still struggles, indie-friendly platforms are increasingly overcrowded, and in general it is damn tough out there.

But there is hope, and lots of it. And for desk job daydreamers at giant studios and the newly trained recruits of this peculiar industry, the temptation to go it alone and found your own studio is immense.

The reason that now is still a good time to be bold and make a go of your own start-up is this; the industry is behind you. Support for newlyformed teams has never been greater, and as the industry ratio of small studios to giant production houses continues to swing in favour of the little guy, and by neccesity tools companies and service providers are keen to help you.

Turn to page 21 and you'll find the start of eight pages of advice for start-ups from trade bodies, developers large and small, games industry lawyers, and those behind various initiatives to help you make a go of your own company.

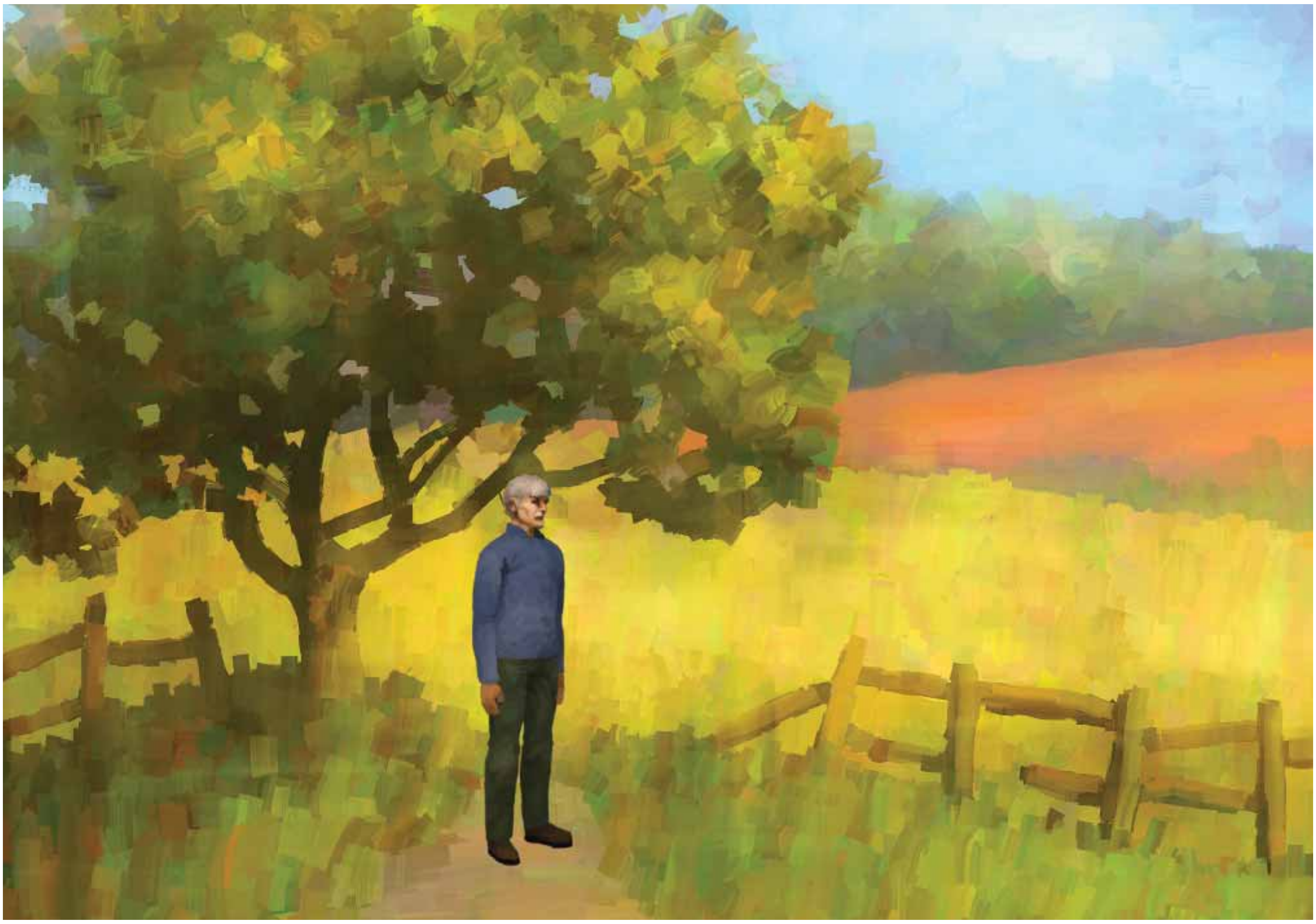
Finding these contributors wasn't hard. Such is the wealth of people out there keen to help start-ups. Elsewhere in this issue there's advice on the physical creation of your studio space, tips on management, and spotlights on exciting new start-ups like Wish (see page 35). Never before have so many stepped forward to help *Develop* address a single issue. Again, the industry is on your side.

And today, more than ever, there are numerous ways to get funded. Aside from investors keen to back the next big thing and various funding bodies, even Kickstarter has started to spread its wings, opening its doors to projects from UK ventures (see page 6).

It might be unwise to predict a new golden era, as the challenge that remain for start-ups are gargantuan, but I beleive that now, more than ever, is a great time to turn your daydreams about your own company into a reality.

Will Freeman
will.freeman@intentmedia.co.uk

Will



Kickstarter opens its doors to UK developers

The popular crowdfunding platform is now available for UK-based projects, as the country's industry readies its games for pre-production pledges, and hopes for a new era of games financing optimism

Freelance game writer and designer Steve Ince is hoping to use the crowdfunding site to fund his in-development title Caroline's Secret (Above)

by Will Freeman

KICKSTARTER, THE MOST popular vehicle for crowdfunding games development projects, is now available in the UK.

Whereas previously UK residents could only pledge, but not create projects, now they can seek funding on the platform. The move has be widely welcomed by UK developers of every size, who have until now had to sit and watch as their US counterparts secure funding from the platform, or navigate complicated loopholes in an attempt to position their projects as US creations.

"Kickstarter coming to the UK presents a great opportunity for developers to generate funds and produce games that are better and more expansive than originally intended," said Richard Wilson, CEO of trade body Tiga. "Many of our members talk about the problems of getting bank finance, and Kickstarter presents a great alternative which involves video games players too. We have seen some amazing projects already with Kickstarter, and it is now the UK developers' turn to realise its benefits."

A number of UK studios and individuals have already prepared projects for Kickstarter, and at the time of writing, numerous others are considering the crowdfunding vehicle for their games.

"Publisher finance and other sources of development funds are becoming scarce," stated Simon Prytherch, CEO of Chromativity, which is considering submitting projects to Kickstarter now that it welcomes UK studios. "We still have to finance game development in order to bring quality experiences to the consumer. I think virtually every studio has either a great title in their back catalog, or one or more of their team were the driving force behind a classic game. I think if you have these elements and you have the right dev team then it is a great start for a Kickstarter project."

Meanwhile, longstanding UK developer Rebellion is now 'strongly considering' using

Guildford-based studio Kinaesthetic Games is set to use Kickstarter's debut in the UK to try and fund its beat 'em-up Kung Fu Superstar (Main image)

Rebellion CEO Jason Kingsley

Kinaesthetic's Kostas Zarifis

Steve Ince, freelance designer

Tiga CEO Richard Wilson

Simon Prytherch, Chromativity

the platform, studio CEO and co-founder Jason Kingsley told *Develop*.

“Up to now if you wanted to put a project onto Kickstarter there were some legal hoops to jump through, re having a US entity involved. Now Kickstarter has arranged things so it can be done by a UK-owned entity in a straightforward way,” he said, before explaining his previous concerns.

“We were also a bit worried about making ‘taxable supplies’ in the US and therefore falling into the US tax system, at least in a technical sense.”

> **“*We have seen some amazing projects already and it is now the UK developers' turn to realise its benefits.*”**
>
> Richard Wilson, Tiga

Kickstarter is, of course, not the only crowdfunding platform, and options already available to UK studios include the popular Indiegogo offering and the game-specific Gambitous alternative. However, Kickstarter's status with both industry and consumers means it is proving very attractive to UK games makers.

“The main difference to me seems to be in terms of visibility,” said Steve Ince, freelance games writer and designer, on the contrast between Kickstarter and its rivals. “Kickstarter is clearly much more high profile even though, as I understand it, Indiegogo has been around for longer. Indiegogo offers more options on the money raising side but people may have to be cautious about what they go for. Kickstarter is much cleaner and simpler with lots of people already buying into its philosophy.”

Ince added he is looking to now use Kickstarter to fund his in-development adventure game project *Caroline's Secret*.

Meanwhile, it is hoped by some that the debut of Kickstarter in the UK can serve to counter growing concerns that the platform has lost some of its appeal after high profile fully pledged failures such as *Haunts: The Manse Macabre* have potentially shaken consumer faith in the model, despite continued support from backers for the troubled project.

“There was the ‘Kickstarter fatigue’ phenomenon a lot of people have been talking and writing about,” stated Kostas Zarifis, game director at Guildford studio Kinaesthetic Games, which is now using Kickstarter to fund its beat 'em-up *Kung Fu Superstar*. “We're hoping the UK launch will alleviate some of that and reignite some of the Kickstarter excitement from the Double Fine time.”

Visit the official website for more information and to register your project. **www.kickstarter.com**

KICKSTARTER UK: THE FAQ

Confused by what Kickstarter's UK debut means for you and your studio? Fear not, as our FAQ will help answer your questions about launching your own crowdfunded project from the United Kingdom.

Does Kickstarter UK work in exactly the same way as the US version?
Nearly, but not exactly. Almost every element is identical to its US counterpart, but rather than use Amazon Payments as US users do, backers of UK projects will enter their details directly into the main Kickstarter website.

Can members of the public based outside of the UK pledge to UK projects?
Yes. As with any other Kickstarter project, people from across the globe can pledge donations.

Will there be a special UK Kickstarter website?
No. UK-based Kickstarter drives will be listed on the main website alongside all the other projects.

How do the fees charged by Kickstarter work for UK-based projects?
Pledges under £10 are subject to a five per cent fee, while pledges of £10 or over will be charged at three per cent. There will be no charge applied if the project is unsuccessful in reaching its funding goal.

Will pledges be displayed in sterling or dollars?
UK campaign amounts will be listed in pounds, but international backers will see their donation approximated to U.S. dollars prior to the campaign's completion.

What else will be introduced with the launch of Kickstarter UK?
In the build-up to Kickstarter UK, the platform's team also introduced a streamlined international shipping option for both US and UK projects. The update means it will be much clearer when a project creator has requested that international backers add an additional amount to their pledges to cover shipping of games and other items.

//COMMENT: STUDIO MANAGEMENT

Office space

Tim Heaton, The Creative Assembly

Few get into games development to consider interior design, but the option available – however unusual (above) – can have a huge impact on your team's energy

ONE OF THE perennial discussions that go on within development studios is how to lay them out. Games development's fairly unique needs of big teams, vastly different creative disciplines, ad-hoc communication routes and changing requirements through the lifecycle of a game create a weird set of particular problems.

The multitude of solutions often goes to the heart of what the developer is about, and it's always telling to see how a developer has set up. From Valve's fully moveable desks (so you can reposition yourself wherever you want, to go along with the ability to work on anything you want), through to individual offices for all, it's an important message you give to your teams about how you think work should be done. Anyone whose seen Notch's cosy new offices in Stockholm can see he's made a bob or two out of *Minecraft*.

Fairly recently we fitted out a whole new floor at CA towers, and we're starting phase two of that expansion now.

The floor we took was completely bare, so we had a completely blank plan to work from. That was our first problem.

We contracted an office design company to come and help us, and the first few meetings were interesting. Being no experts we had the attitude, 'we don't know what we want but we'll know when we see it'. That's a pretty poor way to start any project, and understandably the gurus of office design started to get a bit frustrated. When confronted with an aged copper door design we'd launch into 'copper's nice but it's not just us… or maybe it is' freeform discussions.

> ***Games development has unique needs of big teams, vastly different creative disciplines, ad-hoc communication routes and ever changing requirements.***

TAKING A SEAT

Hugely patient, the design company eventually asked if we'd like to go for a day out in London to see contemporary furniture design shops and examples of state-of-the-art offices. This was a real eye-opener, being able to point at things and go 'yes, that,' was really helpful. It also showed how similar to the clothing fashion industry the office fit-out industry is. There are clear trends and having the latest designs is seen, by some, as important. The latest chairs by Herman Miller et al are beautiful design objects, and everyone's seen a start-up splurge some of its venture capital on the excellent – but so last season – Aeron chairs.

The key decision to make is between open-plan, cubicles, offices or hybrids of those ideas. In my experience software engineers tend to like the idea of offices – giving them peace and quiet – whereas the designers like the cut and thrust of being surrounded by people who can hear and appreciate their brilliant jokes. But it's not as clear-cut as that, and the needs of the team are more than any individual. For European developers it's usual to see open-plan offices. The key factors in making that successful are controlling background noise – usually people laughing at the designer's brilliant jokes – and allowing space for people to escape for ad-hoc meetings or just to sit and relax. Break-out areas are vital – we found some great sound killing high-backed sofas to scatter around the office, which I now see in every photo of every rich internet company, and arguably less rich social games developers.

OPEN-MINDED

We certainly favour the open-plan approach, and so once we'd tentatively picked the fixtures and fitting the implementation started. It was interesting to watch the project management process. It seemed a massive cheat to me that you could actually, physically see pretty much where everything was up to. Contrast that to discussions with a tech team: 'where are we up to on the animation system'. '80 per cent done'. 'Really? Is it really? Because there is nothing on the screen'. It enforces the view that it's a good assumption that nothing is close to done until its visually there.

The fit-out team used Microsoft Project. I wanted to tell them that was 'so 2003', but really, physically building rooms is the perfect example of what waterfall project management is there for.

It was a really interesting project. We're proud of the results and very happy we had a bit of guidance.

Now, back to making the games.

Tim Heaton is studio director at The Creative Assembly, the UK-founded studio behind the acclaimed *Total War* series of PC games, as well as numerous other works including original and licensed products.
www.creative-assembly.co.uk

develop iPad

Videos are available within the iPad Edition of **Develop** on iTunes and the Browser-based Digital Edition, which can be accessed at **develop-online.net**

THIS MONTH: Unity's Mechanim in action **Crisp Thining's player monitoring tech explained** UE3 makes Lost Planet 3 shine

Sponsored by bigWORLD TECHNOLOGY

develop
INDUSTRY EXCELLENCE AWARDS
WINNER '12

See Your Games in a Whole New Light

"Warfighter looks frickin' amazing."
- GameSpy
MEDAL OF HONOR WARFIGHTER
© 2012. EA. All rights reserved.

Enlighten
Award-winning lighting technology

- Real-time global illumination technology
- Rapid creation of AAA-quality lighting
- Dynamic, static and hybrid lighting models supported
- Flexible tools, simple workflow, and real-time preview of all game lighting
- Optimized runtime for Xbox 360®, PlayStation®3, PlayStation®Vita, Wii U™, PC, iOS, Android and next generation

www.geomerics.com

Geomerics

ENLIGHTEN™

HERE'S WHY ONTARIO, CANADA IS YOUR NEXT BIG IDEA

ONTARIO
CANADA

Ontario has an impressive history of innovation, invention and award-winning products. We have a diversified talent pool of more than 300,000 skilled ICT workers and boast the highest percentage of post-secondary graduates in the G7. Businesses work in collaboration with educational institutions and government, enabling innovations to move quickly from idea to your supply chain. From wireless communications to digital gaming to mobile app development – Ontario's information and communications companies are defining what leading edge means. Source your solutions from where innovation is happening. Make Ontario your next big idea.

YourNextBigIdea.ca/SourceICT

36%
are Engineers or Programmers across all industries in Ontario

23%
Business or Systems Analysts

22%
Technicians or Database Administrators

13%
Designers, writers or auditors

7%
Managers

Ontario Paid for by the Government of Ontario.

//COMMENT: TRENDS

What doesn't kill you...

by **Ana Kronschnabl,** Fluffy Logic

Deciding to be your own boss could be dream fulfilled, but could also push you to the limit

IF NOT EVERYONE'S dream, starting your own studio is certainly a fantasy that has occurred to most of us at one time or another. Usually when you have just been told to make the thing blue rather than red for the umpteenth time by your idiot boss who seems totally incapable of reaching any kind of informed decision and actually sticking to it.

The daydream is then followed by the reality check of green light meetings, employment law, PAYE and pensions. It is at this point that most people leave the dream behind, smile and make it blue. Not because they don't want to follow their ambitions, but because the reality of being your own boss, and especially of employing other people, is pretty daunting.

Certainly, it is not a lifestyle choice that would suit everyone. If you like the certainty of a paycheck at the end of every month or stress-free evenings and weekends (though neither of these are always guaranteed in the games industry) then it probably isn't a choice for you.

But if neither of these things is daunting then read on.

TAKE CONTROL

The truth about both of these situations is that the only real change is that you are more in control; if employees were aware of how close most companies are to either overdraft or bankruptcy they probably wouldn't sleep so well. Which brings me to probably one of the main facets to running your own company: responsibility.

Not the most glamorous word, but it is what running your own business is all about. You are responsible for choosing what direction to take the company, what value you place on your staff, along with hundreds, and I do mean hundreds, of other small decisions that crop up in a working day. Which includes motivating any and all of the people who work for you. Not always the easiest task. The last thing you want to be bothered with when you are trying your damnedest to hit a deadline is the Xmas party, but miss that out at your peril.

Another bit of advice I would impart is to learn how to run a business first, if only a little bit. Running a business really does involve you being an expert in a lot of different roles. Obviously, the larger your company the easier this becomes, as there will be someone else to do the job for you. However, this can have its own downsides; losing touch with the actual job you love and the people you work with being just two of these. But attending evening classes on book-keeping and learning how to read spreadsheets is a necessary part of running every business, even if you have an accountant. If you don't you will never understand your finances. Without this you have no business plan and, very likely, very little future after the first project. As all small-to-medium-sized games companies will tell you, one of the hardest things to do is to keep the company going and concentrate on finishing off projects you are working on, whilst at the same time trying to bring in new work. That considered, a love of plate-spinning and multitasking is an absolute must.

> ***"You are responsible for choosing what direction to take the company, what value you place on your staff, which includes motivating any and all of them."***

THE TIME IS RIGHT?

This edition is aimed at helping all of those people out there who believe that the time is right for them. The last thing that I would want to do is to put people off, but games development is a challenging choice.

As we are all aware, despite games being one of the fastest growing industries, the incentives given to other countries has had a seriously detrimental effect on games production in the UK. According to research by TIGA, the amount of people employed in the games industry fell from 9,900 in July 2008 to 9,010 by the end of November 2010. TIGA believe these figures were due to the huge tax breaks offered in other countries. As an answer to this, the UK government have announced earlier this year that they will also offer their own series of tax breaks. Although the exact nature of these is yet to be determined, they will hopefully, address some of the disparities currently operating elsewhere around the globe.

If you are still determined then all I can say is 'good luck'. It is, without doubt, one of the most fast-paced, exciting industries to be involved in at the moment. Whether you choose to plough your recent, hard-earned royalties into that killer, triple-A console game you have always dreamed of, or fill that niche in apps for 70-year-old trout fishermen, you will be faced with similar issues; namely those that accompany the setting up and maintenance of a successful business. Having the choice of whether to make the spaceship blue or red is really what it is all about and it is a fulfilling and fun thing to do – if it doesn't kill you that is.

Ana Kronschnabl has run a multiplicity of businesses in video, branding, games and digital media. She has worked in larger companies and in research, but has always been drawn back to the heady world of entrepreneurship. She is currently CEO and creative director of **www.fluffylogic.net**

//COMMENT: BUSINESS

Going the distance

by **Nick Gibson**, Games Investor Consulting

> ***If Sony's strategy is to run a marathon with PS3, then Nintendo's has been more like a sprint. Wii burst out of the blocks, to unprecedented performances.***

RECENTLY IT HAS become fashionable to suggest that the current console generation is as good as over. Nintendo, with an unassailable lead, has effectively won, while Sony has limped into last place. Where are we actually in this console cycle? Has Nintendo really 'won' and Sony 'lost'?

The current state of play is that Nintendo's global Wii installed base is just under 97 million, 360 is at over 68 million and PS3 is approaching 67 million units. It certainly looks like a devastating lead. To surpass Nintendo, both Sony and Microsoft would need to generate 30 million unit sales over and above what Nintendo achieves during the rest of their respective consoles' lifetimes. That is, without question, a formidable challenge, but history suggests it is an achievable one, for Sony at least.

This snapshot of the runners doesn't come in the last lap; in fact not even in the last half of the race. Around 55 million of Sony's 150 million-plus PS2 unit sales to date have come in years seven-to-13. In fact, PS2 continues to sell, with some four million units sold in 2011. The original PlayStation also achieved a 10-year-plus lifespan, and this all points to a long term, 'hold your nerve'-style strategy by Sony to maximise the longevity of its consoles, extending support of its platforms long after it launches successor hardware. This strategy has put them at odds with Nintendo and Microsoft for whom the arrival of a new format has historically heralded the end of their support for the existing console.

A third of PlayStation 2s were sold in its twilight years, therefore PS3 could yet trump its rivals

THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE?

If Sony's strategy is to run a marathon with PS3, then Nintendo's has been more like a sprint. Wii burst out of the blocks, powering to unprecedented performances in years one and two, selling well over double Microsoft and Sony's unit sales.

However, year two proved to be Wii's peak year and although its decline was gradual in year three, it has fallen off a cliff since then, with 2012 sales expected to be around six million, half that of 2011. With limited room for manoeuvre on Wii's price and with Wii U's launch, we do not expect Nintendo to be able or willing to coax much sales life out of the Wii after 2014, by which point sales may well have fallen to immaterial levels.

In contrast, Sony and Microsoft's strategies have seen their sales grow more slowly and consistently. Launching with more sophisticated, or future-proof, hardware and higher price points, yielding more sales and stimulating price drops, has allowed them to prolong the their consoles' shelf lives.

However, Microsoft and Sony diverge in other areas. Despite countless geographic initiatives, Microsoft's sales remain highly concentrated around a small number of countries. Neither it nor Nintendo can match Sony's extensive international distribution reach, which has proven critical at driving sales during the second half of its consoles' lives. While there is no doubting Sony's long-term thinking for PS3, Microsoft dropped the original Xbox soon after 360's launch, and its commitment to 360 after its successor launches is unclear.

ON THE DECLINE

PS3 and 360 unit sales peaked in 2011, years five and six respectively, and we do not believe they will be bettered. However, the telling detail is that all three consoles' current rates of decline are very different. Sony's more gradual decline now puts it clearly ahead of Microsoft in monthly global sales – and on track to exceed 11.5 million units in 2012 – and two-to-three times that of the Wii.

We believe that this sales momentum combined with a greater games and non-games content flow from PSN will endow PS3 with a longevity of 12-to-14 years – some four-to-six years longer than the Wii will probably last. Although it won't get close to PS2's total sales level.

However, if it approximates PS2's sales pattern we believe it could see a further four million-plus unit sales, a figure that could well put it ahead of Wii.

As with PS1 and PS2, it won't be hardcore gamers in the major Western territories that drive this late adoption, but more diverse demographics and purchasers from less affluent socio-economic groups in the West and in territories such as Russia, the Middle East and South America, for whom the timing of each games console cycle is always delayed a chunk of time.

So is the current cycle finished? Not by a long shot. There is still huge opportunity left in the market. We reckon that there are at least 70 million unit sales still to come for current generation consoles. It is also way too early to declare winners and losers. After all, you don't declare a race over at the halfway point or when one of the frontrunners starts to fall behind.

Nick Gibson is a director at Games Investor Consulting, providing research, strategy consulting and corporate finance services to the games, media and finance industries.
www.gamesinvestor.com

//COMMENT: MOBILE

More money from your mobile game for $0, part 1

by **Will Luton**, Mobile Pie

IT MAY SEEM that the only way you can guarantee mobile marketing success is with a wodge of cash thrown in the faces of greedy 'user acquisition solutions'. The truth is that the foundation of a good marketing campaign costs nothing more than time. The same is true of increasing revenue.

This article is the first in a two-parter of tips on how to speculate less and accumulate more from your mobile games.

1. SALES

Perhaps the easiest way to boost revenue is to reduce your prices for a short advertised period. Either this is your IAPs, linked to a targeted marketing push to your users (email, push notifications or in-game pop-ups), or the upfront price of your app.

The latter is known as 'Peggling' (owing to *Peggle's* notorious iOS repricing jumping it around the charts) and if done well can shoot your app up the charts and bring lots of organic users along with it.

QUICK SCORE
0
SPACE BLAST
TOP SCORE JEFF
300,000
BALL-O-TRON
FREE BALL
FEVERMETER
BIG BANG!
+25,000
POINT BOOST!
x10
x5
x3
x2
MENU

PopCap's Peggle, the game that inspired the term 'Peggling', describing a game that richochets about the sales charts due to ever-changing pricing

2. FRESH VIRTUAL ITEMS

If your game has virtual items you should be constantly building more to draw users back and increase their spend. Consider:

- Seasonal content for international or regional holidays that create emotional connections. Think along the lines of Santa hats and the Easter Bunny.
- Use analytics to identify successes, and seek to understand why they sell so well, then double down on that.
- Branded content, using existing IPs from film, food or even other games can drive huge revenue.

3. LOBBY YOUR PLATFORM HOLDER

The holy grail of app marketing is featured placement. Contrary to popular belief, apps are rarely plucked from obscurity for the spotlight. More likely featured status is a response to lobbying. So get in contact with the developer relations for your platform and ask what you need to do.

4. AB TEST ICON AND NAME

Your high-level proposition is the most important thing in marketing. In mobile this is name and icon – which should grab app store browers and scream "download me!".

Put love into building a bunch of potential name and icon combinations, then put them on a banner campaign and monitor the click through rate. This will show which are most effective at generating interest. Refine this, and repeat.

Google 'Markj.net AB test' for details.

5. AFFILIATE LINKING

Signing up to Apple's affiliate scheme will earn you an additional five per cent on every sale on the App Store you link to. Plus, you get better tracking analytics.

This could even be used to drive traffic out to all iTunes and iBook content. So, by adding in more games or soundtrack, video or book links, you'll earn money; even if the customer ends up buying something else.

> ***"The holy grail of app marketing is featured placement. Contrary to popular belief, apps are rarely plucked from obscurity for the spotlight."***

6. REDUCE BOUNCE AND CHURN

Every part of your marketing funnel needs to be optimised – from banner ads, through to your icon and name. However, in free-to-play the funnel doesn't end at the game, but instead the IAP.

When designing analytics it is invaluable to build in a way of tracking how far a user gets in to your game. Looking at where players leave will point to where they get confused, bored or frustrated. From this you can identify problems, fix and increase retention, which increases revenue.

7. MAKE BUILDING AN IAP AN EVENT

Remove any expendable steps to an IAP, then make a show of the result. Whizzes, bangs and particles will make the experience fun and rewarding, in turn making the player want to repeat the experience. Harvest a gem in *Bejewelled Blitz* for a perfect example.

8. AB TEST YOUR IAPS

Things as small as colour, wording or placement can make a button more attractive to click, yet it's very difficult to predict which changes will work and which fail. Therefore AB testing any button, or indeed the entire process leading to an IAP is the best way of maximising click-through to a purchase.

AND IN PART TWO…

Coming next month are nine more tips, including advice on building a community, insight on refining your pinch point, and perspective on selling merchandise.

And it's all for sweet FA.

Will Luton is a games consultant specialising in design and free-to-play. Formerly he served at Sega Europe and award-winning boutique studio Mobile Pie. Follow Will on Twitter at @will_luton or visit **www.will-luton.co.uk**

THE MONTH AHEAD

A look at what November has in store for the industry and beyond

NOVEMBER 1ST
Movember.
Start cultivating a tash to turn heads and raise cash for a good cause.

NOVEMBER 5TH
Guy Fawkes Night.
Occupy. *V for Vendetta*. Fireworks. Remember the man whose ideals inspire even now.

NOVEMBER 6TH
Halo 4.
Master Chief returns in 343's vision for Microsoft's flagship sci-fi series.

NOVEMBER 8TH
International Day of Radiology.
On this day in 1895 a German physicist discovered X-rays.

NOVEMBER 13TH
Call of Duty: Black Ops II.
Treyarch puts its stamp on futuristic fray with the latest instalment of the *CoD* series.

LAUNCH
Future Gaming & Digital Conference 2012

NOVEMBER 13TH
Launch Conference 2012.
Birmingham's conference on careers, technology and business in games is back.

NOVEMBER 17TH
International Students Day.
A day dedicated to celebrating the up-and-coming talent around the world.

lgc
london games conference 2012

NOVEMBER 21ST
London Games Conference.
Digital discovery and distribution are explored at London's annual trade event.

NOVEMBER 21ST
World Television Day.
With the myth of square eyes behind us, let's all bask in TV's glorious light.

NOVEMBER 30TH
Far Cry 3.
Explore an island paradise in the psychotic world of this cinematic FPS.

NOVEMBER 30TH
Computer Security Day.
Raising awareness about computer-related infections since 1988. Debugging...

NOVEMBER 30TH
Wii U European launch.
Nintendo's new home console hits UK and EU stores, kick-starting the next generation.

DEVELOP DIARY

Your complete games development event calendar for the months ahead

GameConnection

GAME CONNECTION EU 2012
November 28th to 30th
Paris, France
www.game-connection.com

Game Connection is pitched as a speed dating event for business-focused games makers.

It's a one-stop shop to meet dozens of potential partners involved in all stages of the production pipeline, from conception, outsourcing, publishing, financing and more, in back-to-back 30-minute meetings.

More than 1,600 visitors are expected at this year's event, which has introduced workshops and master classes into its mix of networking and presentations.

NOVEMBER 2012

LAUNCH CONFERENCE 2012
November 13th to 14th
Birmingham, UK
www.launchconference.co.uk

MONTREAL INTERNATIONAL GAME SUMMIT 2012
November 13th to 14th
Montreal, Canada
www.mtldgtl.com

SMARTPHONE & TABLET GAMES SUMMIT 2012
November 15th
London, UK
www.mediabistro.com

SOCIAL GAMES SUMMIT 2012
November 15th
London, UK
www.mediabistro.com

LONDON GAMES CONFERENCE 2012
November 21st
London, UK
www.londongamesconference.com

GAME CONNECTION EUROPE 2012
November 28th to 30th
Paris, France
www.game-connection.com

DECEMBER 2012

XBOX 360 / MCV CHRISTMAS QUIZ
December 4th
London, UK
www.mcvuk.com/events

MOBILE GAMING EUROPE 2012
December 6th to 7th
London, UK
videogamesintelligence.com/mobile

EVOLVE IN LONDON 2012
December 11th
London, UK
www.evolveconference.com

JANUARY 2013

CONSUMER ELECTRONIC SHOW 2013
January 8th to 11th
Las Vegas, USA
www.cesweb.org

MOBILE GAMES FORUM 2013
January 23rd to 24th
London, UK
www.mobilegamesforum.co.uk

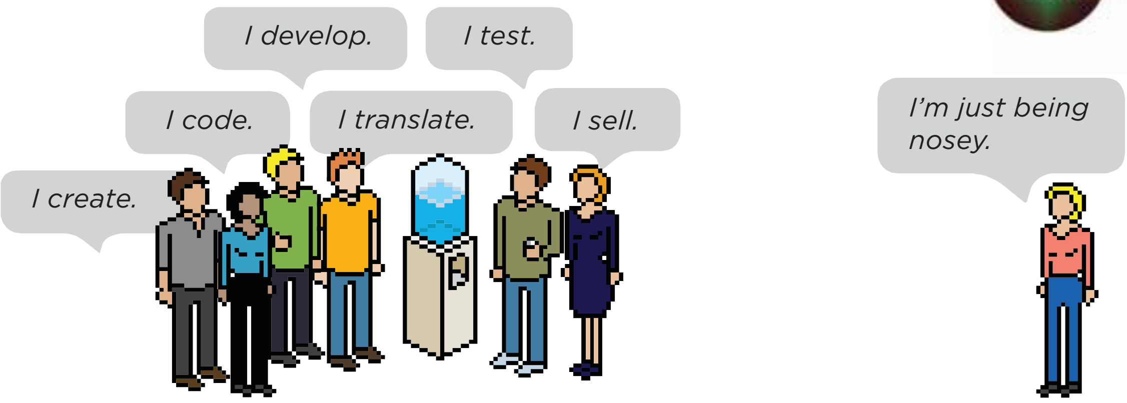
DEVELOP QUIZ
January 30th
London, UK
www.develop-online.net/events

FEBRUARY 2013

ICE 2013
February 5th to 7th
London, UK
ice.totallygaming.com

wave®

Sound Design and Audio Post Production


I develop.
I test.
I code.
I translate.
I sell.
I create.
I'm just being nosey.

opm jobs.com recruitment

programming
dev management
test and translate
commercial
creative

It takes all sorts to make a game.

We know there's a lot of people involved in bringing a game to market; and at OPM we know a lot of them personally. We have exciting opportunities for professionals across all areas of the business with leading companies throughout the industry worldwide.

Speak to an OPM specialist consultant – experts in their division who understand exactly where you're coming from and most importantly where you'd like your career to go.

So, take your next step to achieving your aims and ambitions – give us a call or register on our website.

T: +44(0)1206 21 44 21 | www.opmjobs.com

Associate member of ukie

FINALIST develop

OPM – AWARD NOMINEES
EVERY YEAR SINCE 2004

PLACING PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE IN PROFESSIONAL PLACES

The World's Best Game Studios

DEVELOP'S RANKING OF the world's most successful games developers is better than ever for 2012, providing a hugely valuable guide to the global games industry.

Now live in Apple's App Store, the latest edition of the *Develop 100* features a list of the top hundred developers in the world based on the revenues generated by their games.

It is available only for iPad, and costs just £4.99 for a volume overflowing with insight and data. That includes profiles on each of the 100 studios, sales numbers and statistics, as well as a wealth of background facts and analysis.

GfK Chart-Track data has been used to formulate the list. Chart-Track has the most accurate chart reporting tools on the planet, monitoring the sale of almost every game and peripheral sold anywhere and everywhere in the UK.

In 2012 EA Canada came out on top, beating the likes of Nintendo, Ubisoft Montreal, Infinity Ward and Traveller's Tales to the top spot.

This month, however, we draw your attention to Dimps, one of the developers responsible for saving Nintendo's 3DS launch, and Rocksteady Studios, which made over £22 million with their sequel to *Batman: Arkham Asylum*.

And our list doesn't stop with the current 2012 volume. Buying the iPad Develop 100 will guarantee you access to the other Top 100s we'll be launching in the coming months. Volume One is for retail sales, but we'll be adding lists for online, social and mobile standings in future.

Want to find out more?

The *Develop 100* is now available for £4.99 within the *Develop Magazine* app for iPad.

Download the *Develop Magazine* app now through the iTunes store.

£1.72m

Total UK revenue in 2011 for Dimps's *Street Fighter IV 3D* which was a 3DS bestseller

£162.38m

Total UK revenue created in 2011 by the Top Ten studios in Japan

» DIMPS

UK RETAIL REVENUE IN 2011

£3.6m

» ABOUT

Founded: 2000
Independent (Majority owned by Sega)
Location: Osaka, Japan
www.dimps.com

» FAMOUS FOR...

Street Fighter

Nintendo has a lot to thank Dimps for.

The Japanese developer arguably single-handedly saved the launch of the 3DS with *Street Fighter IV 3D* – a title that the specialist press cooed over and early adaptors got particularly excited about.

That went on to sell a cool £1.7 million in the UK and peak at number four in the charts.

Dimps also released *Sonic Generations* and *Super Monkey Ball* for the 3DS. And it co-develops, ports and produces games for clients including Namco Bandai, Sega and Capcom.

Dimps employs 181 staff, and current president Takashi Nishiyama and managing director Hiroshi Matsumoto are co-creators of the iconic *Street Fighter* series.

STUDIO'S 2011 BESTSELLERS

	FORMATS	PUBLISHER	RELEASE DATE	TOTAL REV
SUPER STREET FIGHTER IV 3D EDITION	3DS	CAPCOM	MAR 2011	£1.72m
	TOTAL			**£1.72m**
SONIC GENERATIONS	3DS	SEGA	NOV 2011	£0.93m
	TOTAL			**£0.93m**
SUPER MONKEY BALL 3D	3DS	SEGA	MAR 2011	£0.93m
	TOTAL			**£0.93m**
DRAGON BALL Z: SHIN BUDOKAI	PSP	NAMCO BANDAI GAMES	MAY 2006	£0.02m
	TOTAL			**£0.02m**
DRAGON BALL Z: BURST LIMIT	XBOX 360	NAMCO BANDAI GAMES	JUN 2008	£0.01m
	TOTAL			**£0.01m**

100

Our monthly analysis of the data from the latest Develop 100 continues with a look at two teams bringing in millions

2012 Edition Volume 1

» ROCKSTEADY STUDIOS

UK RETAIL REVENUE IN 2011

£25.45m

» ABOUT

Founded: 2004
In-house (Owned by Warner Bros.)
Location: London, UK
www.rocksteadyltd.com

» 2011 RELEASE

Batman: Arkham City

Founded in 2004 by Sefton Hill and Jamie Walker, Rocksteady Studios is widely-respected for making the impossible: decent superhero video games. The team's *Batman* series grew in 2011 with *Batman: Arkham City*.

Based in North London's hip Kentish Town neighbourhood, the studio has done much to prove its ability to handle one of the most admired IPs as well as the UK's role in the creation of globally successful triple-A games.

Rocksteady Studios' debut was a less dazzling affair. While 2006 shooter release *Urban Chaos: Riot Response* reviewed well, it made little impact on the public's collective conscience. Happily for Hill, Walker and their 100 staff, an outing with *The Dark Knight* changed all that.

STUDIO'S 2011 BESTSELLERS

	FORMATS	PUBLISHER	RELEASE	TOTAL REV
BATMAN: ARKHAM CITY	XBOX 360	WARNER BROS. INTERACTIVE	OCT 2011	£12.56m
	PLAYSTATION 3	WARNER BROS. INTERACTIVE	OCT 2011	£9.94m
	PC	WARNER BROS. INTERACTIVE	NOV 2011	£0.28m
	TOTAL			£22.78m
BATMAN: ARKHAM ASYLUM	XBOX 360	SQUARE ENIX EUROPE	AUG 2009	£0.89m
	PLAYSTATION 3	SQUARE ENIX EUROPE	AUG 2009	£0.71m
	PC	SQUARE ENIX EUROPE	SEP 2009	£0.06m
	TOTAL			£1.65m
BATMAN: ARKHAM ASYLUM - GAME OF THE YEAR	XBOX 360	SQUARE ENIX EUROPE	MAR 2010	£0.01m
	TOTAL			£0.01m

£24.45m

Total UK revenue created in 2011 by Rocksteady single-handedly

£100.54m

Total UK revenue created in 2011 by the Top Five studios in the UK

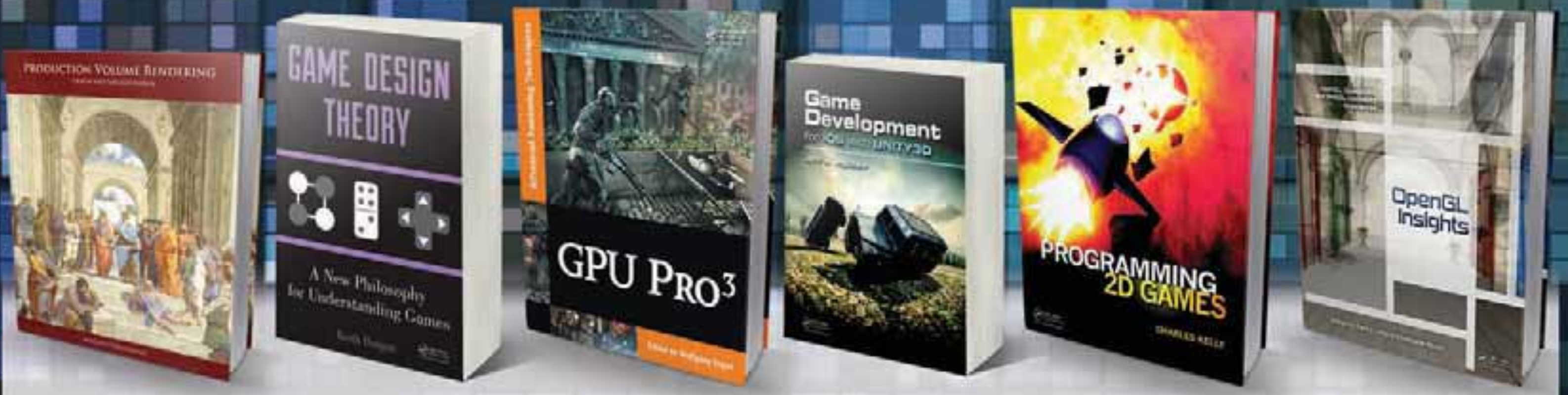
» THE 100 STUDIOS

DEVELOPER	COUNTRY
1ST PLAYABLE	USA
2K CZECH	CZECH REPUBLIC
343 INDUSTRIES	USA
AMAZE ENTERTAINMENT	USA
ASYLUM	UNITED KINGDOM
AVALANCHE SOFTWARE	USA
AVALANCHE STUDIOS	SWEDEN
BEHAVIOUR INTERACTIVE	CANADA
BETHESDA	USA
BIGPARK	CANADA
BIOWARE	CANADA
BLACK LANTERN	USA
BLIZZARD ENTERTAINMENT	USA
BLUE CASTLE GAMES	CANADA
BUNGIE	USA
CAPCOM	JAPAN
CAT DADDY	USA
CERASUS.MEDIA	GERMANY
CITY INTERACTIVE	POLAND
CODEMASTERS	UNITED KINGDOM
CODEMASTERS BIRMINGHAM	UNITED KINGDOM
CREATIVE ASSEMBLY	UNITED KINGDOM
CRITERION GAMES	UNITED KINGDOM
CRYTEK	GERMANY
DIMPS	JAPAN
EA BLACK BOX	CANADA
EA BRIGHT LIGHT	UNITED KINGDOM
EA CANADA	CANADA
EA DICE	SWEDEN
EA TIBURON	USA
EDEN STUDIOS	FRANCE
EIDOS MONTREAL	CANADA
EPIC GAMES	USA
EUROCOM ENTERTAINMENT	UNITED KINGDOM
EXIENT	UNITED KINGDOM
FIREBRAND GAMES	UNITED KINGDOM
FROM SOFTWARE	JAPAN
FRONTIER DEVELOPMENTS	UNITED KINGDOM
GAME FREAK	JAPAN
GEARBOX SOFTWARE	USA
GREZZO	JAPAN
GUERRILLA GAMES	HOLLAND
HARMONIX	USA
HB STUDIOS	CANADA
HEADSTRONG GAMES	UNITED KINGDOM
HEAVY IRON STUDIOS	USA
HIGH MOON STUDIOS	USA
ID SOFTWARE	USA
INFINITY WARD	USA
INSOMNIAC	USA
KAOS STUDIOS	USA
KONAMI DIGITAL ENTERTAINMENT	JAPAN
LAND HO!	JAPAN
LEVEL 5	JAPAN
LIONHEAD STUDIOS	UNITED KINGDOM
MEDIA MOLECULE	UNITED KINGDOM
MONSTER GAMES	USA
NAMCO	JAPAN
NAUGHTY DOG	USA
ND CUBE	JAPAN
NETHERREALM STUDIOS	USA
NINTENDO	JAPAN
OBSIDIAN ENTERTAINMENT	USA
PEOPLE CAN FLY	POLAND
PIPEWORKS	USA
POLYPHONY DIGITAL	JAPAN
RARE	UNITED KINGDOM
RELIC	CANADA
RETRO STUDIOS	USA
ROCKSTAR NORTH	UNITED KINGDOM
ROCKSTAR SAN DIEGO	USA
ROCKSTEADY STUDIOS	UNITED KINGDOM
SEGA	JAPAN
SIDHE	NEW ZEALAND
SLEDGEHAMMER GAMES	USA
SLIGHTLY MAD STUDIOS	UNITED KINGDOM
SONIC TEAM	JAPAN
SPLASH DAMAGE	UNITED KINGDOM
SPORTS INTERACTIVE	UNITED KINGDOM
SQUARE ENIX	JAPAN
SUCKER PUNCH	USA
SUMO DIGITAL	UNITED KINGDOM
TEAM BONDI	AUSTRALIA
TECHLAND	POLAND
THE SIMS STUDIO	USA
THQ SAN DIEGO	USA
TOYS FOR BOB	USA
TRAVELLER'S TALES	UNITED KINGDOM
TREYARCH	USA
TURN 10 STUDIOS	USA
UBISOFT CASABLANCA	MOROCCO
UBISOFT FRANCE	FRANCE
UBISOFT MONTREAL	CANADA
UBISOFT REFLECTIONS	UNITED KINGDOM
VALVE	USA
VISCERAL GAMES	USA
VOLITION	USA
YUKE'S	JAPAN
ZOË MODE	UNITED KINGDOM

Become a Better Game Designer

The Latest Books for GAME DEVELOPERS

SAVE 25%


PRODUCTION VOLUME RENDERING
GAME DESIGN THEORY
A New Philosophy for Understanding Games
GPU PRO3
Game Development for iOS with UNITY3D
PROGRAMMING 2D GAMES
OpenGL Insights

Production Volume Rendering

Design and Implementation

Magnus Wrenninge

SONY PICTURES IMAGEWORKS, SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA, USA

"This book deserves a place on any computer graphics developer's bookshelf. Over the last few years, volume techniques have become essential to any high-end renderer and this book will bring anyone up to speed very quickly. I highly recommend this book."

—Doug Roble, Creative Director of Software, Digital Domain

Catalog no. K13409, September 2012, 355 pp.
ISBN: 978-1-56881-724-8, $49.95 / £31.99

Also available as an eBook

Game Design Theory

A New Philosophy for Understanding Games

Keith Burgun

DINOFARM GAMES, GOLDENS BRIDGE, NEW YORK, USA

This work presents a bold new path for analyzing and designing games. The author provides a holistic solution to understanding the difference between games and other types of interactive systems. He also gives specific advice on how to improve various games and makes helpful suggestions for game designers.

Catalog no. K15305, August 2012, 188 pp., Soft Cover
ISBN: 978-1-4665-5420-7, $39.95 / £25.99

Also available as an eBook

GPU Pro3

Advanced Rendering Techniques

Edited by

Wolfgang Engel

CONFETTI SPECIAL EFFECTS

"GPU Pro3 is a guide to high-end computer graphics for video games and computer animation. Discussing the latest advancements in technology and graphical artistry, taken from 50 of the industry's best, it covers tips on creating interesting geometry, shading, illumination shadows, optimizing 3D engines, and much more. GPU Pro3 is presented with full-color photos of graphical examples, charts, indexes, glossaries, and much more … ."

—*Wisconsin Bookwatch*, April 2012

Catalog no. K14057, February 2012, 408 pp.
ISBN: 978-1-4398-8782-0, $69.95 / £44.99

Also available as an eBook

Game Development for iOS with Unity3D

Jeff W. Murray

PSYCHIC PARROT GAMES, OTTAWA, ONTARIO, CANADA

This hands-on guide takes you through the complete process of Unity iOS game development. A game developer for over 12 years, the author presents production-proven techniques and valuable tips and tricks needed to plan, build, test, and launch games for the iPhone, iPod, and iPad. He walks you through all the necessary procedures, including how to publish your game to the App Store.

Catalog no. K14133, July 2012, 280 pp., Soft Cover
ISBN: 978-1-4398-9219-0, $49.95 / £31.99

Also available as an eBook

Programming 2D Games

Charles Kelly

As game programming techniques are introduced in this complete introduction, you learn how to incorporate them into your own game engine and discover how to use the game engine to create a complete game. The book presents the latest DirectX and Windows coding methods using C++. The example programs for each chapter are available online.

Catalog no. K14701, June 2012, 438 pp.
ISBN: 978-1-4665-0868-2, $59.95 / £38.99

Also available as an eBook

OpenGL Insights

Edited by

Patrick Cozzi

ANALYTICAL GRAPHICS, INC., EXTON, PENNSYLVANIA, USA

Christophe Riccio

AMD, CAMBERLEY, UK

"You don't need to be an expert (maybe this book helps you become one) but the basics should be known to you. … A nice plus is the github site with code for most of the chapters. … this book span[s] topics from simple OpenGL feature descriptions up to general rendering algorithms and shows what is possible with OpenGL and its mobile and web-based cousins. … If you are an OpenGL developer, you will definitely find some interesting gems in here …"

—*RenderingPipeline.com*, July 2012

Catalog no. K14190, July 2012, 712 pp.
ISBN: 978-1-4398-9376-0, $79.95 / £49.99

Also available as an eBook

CRC Press
Taylor & Francis Group

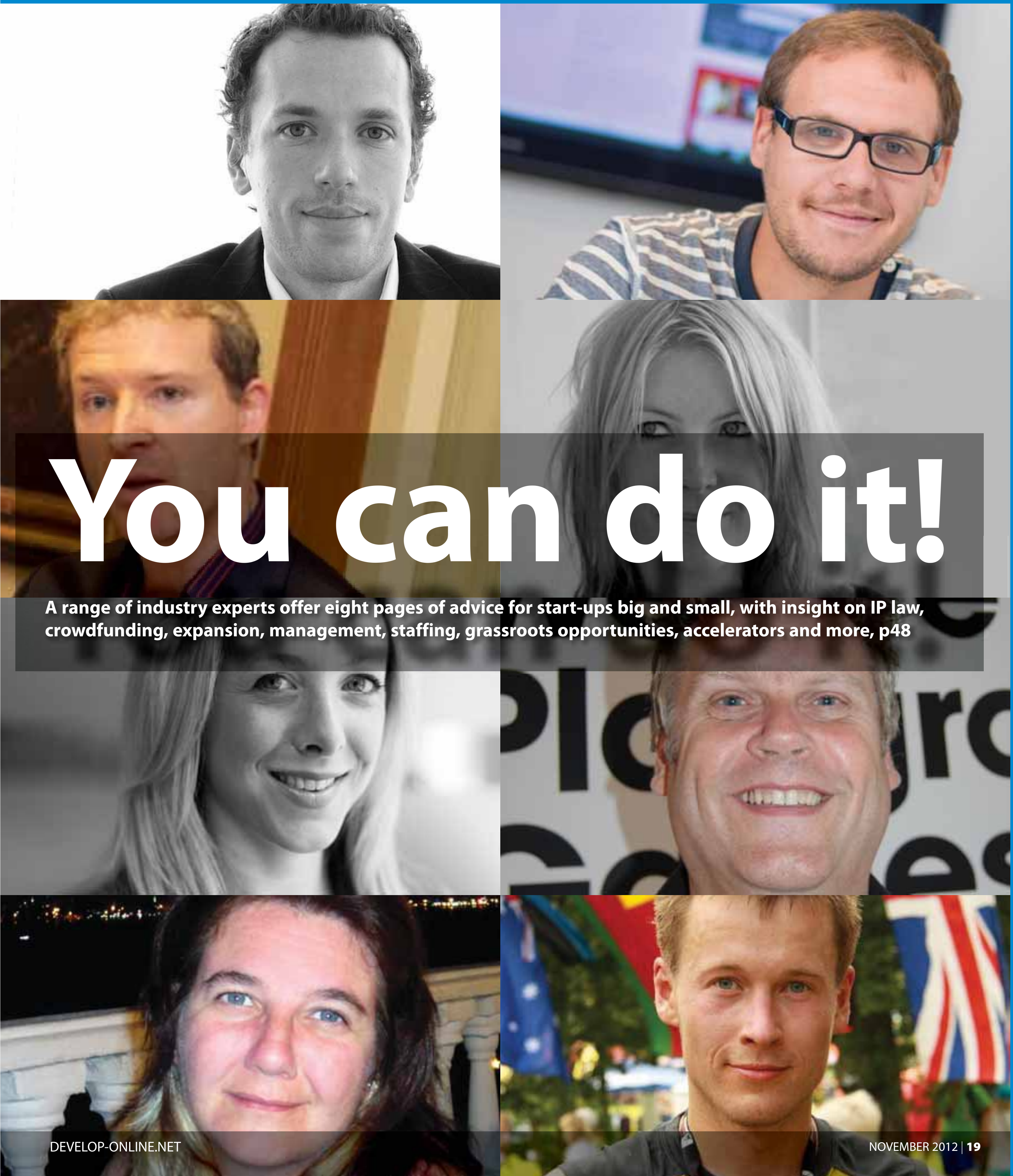
Enter code **KVL05** when ordering at
www.crcpress.com to save **25%**.

BETA

DEVELOPMENT FEATURES, INTERVIEWS, ESSAYS & MORE

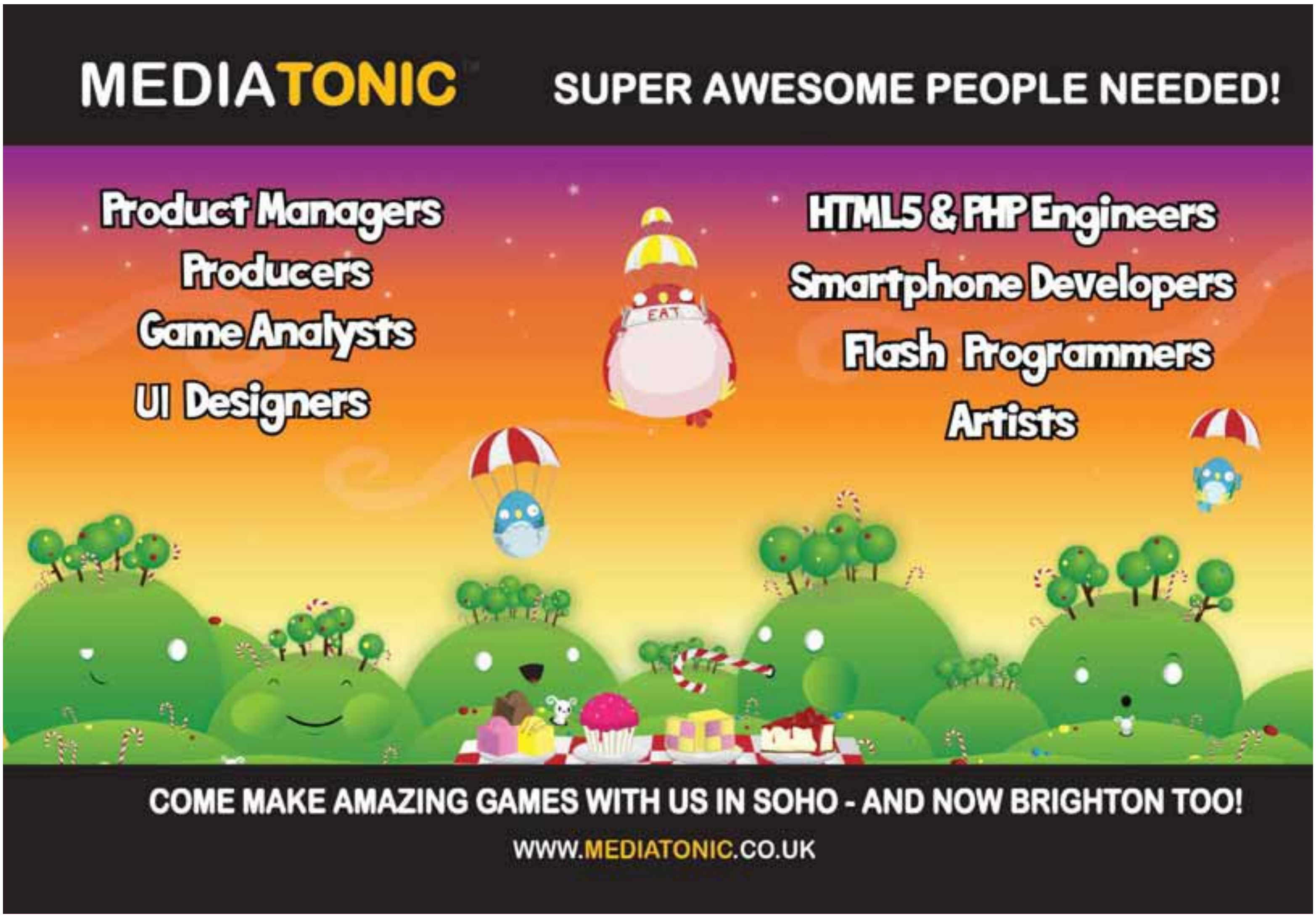
Behind the scenes at Wish Studios

p35



You can do it!

A range of industry experts offer eight pages of advice for start-ups big and small, with insight on IP law, crowdfunding, expansion, management, staffing, grassroots opportunities, accelerators and more, p48



MEDIATONIC

SUPER AWESOME PEOPLE NEEDED!

Product Managers
Producers
Game Analysts
UI Designers

HTML5 & PHP Engineers
Smartphone Developers
Flash Programmers
Artists

COME MAKE AMAZING GAMES WITH US IN SOHO - AND NOW BRIGHTON TOO!

WWW.MEDIATONIC.CO.UK

---

the first gaming startup accelerator in Europe

gamefounders

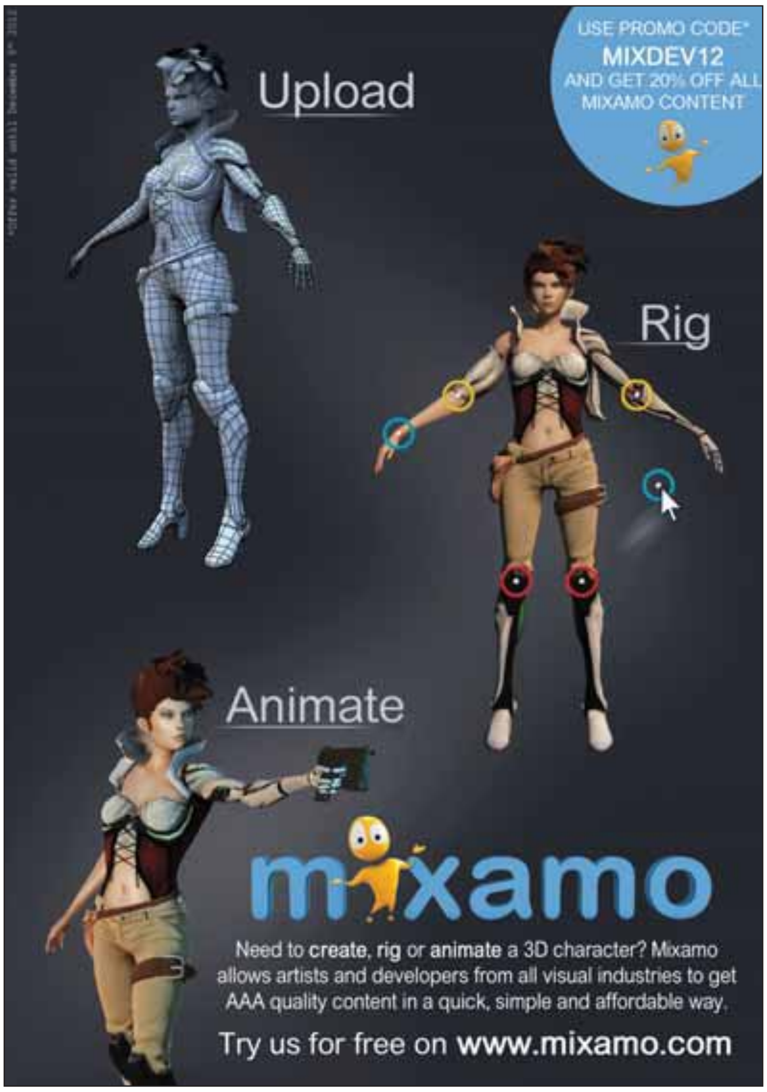
is looking for
GAMING &
GAMIFICATION
STARTUPS

Deadline
Dec.7
2012

We offer:
- 3 months of intense development with
- 70+ gaming veterans, CEOs and developers as mentors
- seed capital for a moderate share in your company
- game-targeted partnership deals
- access to networks of gaming contacts and
- access to gaming investments funds, VCs and angels

powered by
STARTUP ESTONIA

INTERESTED? CHECK OUT:
gamefounders.com



USE PROMO CODE*
MIXDEV12
AND GET 20% OFF ALL
MIXAMO CONTENT

mixamo

Need to create, rig or animate a 3D character? Mixamo allows artists and developers from all visual industries to get AAA quality content in a quick, simple and affordable way.

Try us for free on www.mixamo.com

START YOUR OWN STUDIO

Establishing your own company can be an intimidating business, whether you're a student coder or a triple-A veteran. To help ease the process, we've gathered a range of experts to offer advice from all angles on setting up by yourself

STARTING AFRESH IS sometimes tempting, regardless of your profession.

And in the world of games development, where success stories from the realms of the indie and microstudio scene abound, establishing your own company is even more alluring than in other spheres.

Unlike many industries, games development actively celebrates small studio culture, and ecosystems like mobile, browser and free-to-play make the pipe dreams of ambitious individuals with a desire to go it alone relatively reasonable.

But there's much to learn, especially for the creative people that get into the games industry not because of a deep understanding of business, but because they love making games. For them – and perhaps you – there's lots to consider.

Where to get funding? How to tackle legal matters? Are tech accelerators worth their salt? How do you expand your business? For the spark of an idea in a developers brain to become a start-up, numerous important questions need answering.

Fortunately, *Develop* has gathered some of the finest minds from successful start-ups and the organisations that help them, and gathered their insight over the following eight pages.

Flip through this section of the magazine you hold in your hands, and you'll see government support, tax, management, crowdfunding, handling investors, self-publishing, IP law and a wealth of other topics covered.

So what are you waiting for? Get reading, and by the end of the week, you could be making your start-up daydreams a reality.

Contents

22 – A MATTER OF OWNERSHIP
A games industry lawyer from Sheridans offers invaluable start-up-specific advice on the often bewildering world of intellectual property law

23 – GROW YOUR OWN STUDIO
London success story Mediatonic provides tips on climbing the ranks from zero to hero, and growing your team without sacrificing your studio identity

24 – A FIGURE OF FUNDS
UKIE CEO Jo Twist details the various funding models available to start-ups, and how they can be harnessed, from government schemes to crowdfunding

25 – AND THEY'RE OFF
FormerDroid only met at a gam jam earlier this year, and they've already made a BAFTA-nominated game. MD Fee Stewart explains how they made such rapid progress

26 – DO IT YOURSELF-PUBLISHING
Tiga's Richard Wilson presents a guide to the opportunities and pitfalls that present themselves to start-ups publishing their own games

27 – THE TECH ACCELERATOR EXPERIENCE
Playmob's founder looks at what it's like to build your company via a tech start-up accelerator, and explains how to pick the right one for your team

28 – START YOUR ENGINES
Trevor Williams, Playground Games boss and studio founder several times over, presents his insight on overcoming the hurdles to start-up progress

29 – BUILDING A FOUNDATION
While page 27 looks at accelerators from the insider perspective, here Gamefounders offers some perspective from the organiser's point of view

A matter of ownership

Alex Tutty advises the likes of Mojang and Introversion on legal matters concerning making games and protecting thier companies' interests, and now he's here to help your new studio understand the bewildering world of IP law

Law need not always be a courtroom drama (right), especially with industry-experienced lawyers like Alex Tutty (above) offering advice

THE VALUE OF a games company is composed of a number of things including the knowledge, skills and know-how of its staff.

Typically in start-ups this is the founders – and the intellectual property rights which exist in its technology and games, whether this is its own engine, or elements such as characters or game design.

Start-ups should ensure that value is built in their business by protecting, as much as possible, their IP rights.

Typically, the risk to this would be entering into agreements with unfavourable IP terms. To avoid this it is useful for start-ups to understand IP and how to protect it.

IP rights are the rights which are created as a result of intellectual effort or creative endeavour, and exist to protect the expression of these efforts from being unfairly exploited by a third party without any permission.

There are a number of different rights relevant for games companies, but for most start-ups it is crucial to understand copyright and who owns it.

THE BIG IDEAS

As soon as an original idea is translated into a physical form, whether it be written down, coded or drawn, copyright will automatically exist in it.

The purpose of copyright is to enable a creator to gain value in the work they are producing by protecting it, namely from unauthorised copying.

For a games company the copyright in games predominantly exists in two forms; the source code to a game is protected as literary work as if it were a book, and the pictorial representation of the game on the screen is protected as an artistic work as if it were a picture.

The recent cloning cases have demonstrated that whilst it may not be the source code that is copied if there is copying of a substantial part of the artistic work – for example, the *Tetris* v Xio case – there will be an infringement entitling the owner to take action.

What is considered 'substantial' is qualitative not quantative.

The general rule is that the creator of a work is the first owner of the copyright in it. However, there are exceptions to this. For example, employees do not own the copyright of the work they create in the course of their employment, which is owned by their employer unless they have agreed in writing otherwise.

Conversely, the copyright in works created by a person who is not an employee of a company – for example, a sub-contractor – is owned by the sub-contractor unless there is an agreement otherwise.

Therefore, if a start-up uses sub-contractors it should ensure there is a proper written agreement in place, signed by the sub-contractor to ensure the start-up owns the copyright in what the sub-contractor creates, otherwise it will only have a licence to use it for the purpose that they made known when the work itself was commissioned.

ON THE FLIP SIDE

The flip side to this is that start-ups who undertake work for hire are themselves sub-contractors, and so will be the owner of the copyright unless there is a signed written agreement to the contrary.

Typically the commissioner will enter into an agreement for the start-up to assign all the IP in the work created by the start-up to them, but if the start-up wants to build their own IP by undertaking this work for hire they will need to ensure that they carve out the IP they want to retain from being assigned – along with any third-party tech they use which they do not own, so cannot assign.

If the commissioner is not in the games industry the use of third-party tech and developer tech may also need explaining.

The best way of ensuring that the sub-contractor retains the IP they want to retain is by splitting the copyright in any work being created into distinct parts of third-party IP and developer IP, which will be licensed to the commissioner, and the IP, that will be assigned to the commissioner which is created bespoke for the project.

In this way the start-up will develop their own IP and the commissioner will get what they want.

From my experience working with a large number of start-ups, my advice would be that if you want to build value then you should take some time to understand IP and how it works so it can be identified, retained and protected.

It has huge benefits, and not just for building up intellectual property in a games developer.

It builds value in a company, and furthermore it stops the efforts of you and your team's hard work being dissipated or given away. It can have tax benefits and generally makes the huge effort involved much more worthwhile.

Alex Tutty is a lawyer at Sheridans. He advises a large number of developers including Fat Pebble, Introversion, Mode 7 and Mojang on the legal aspects of the games industry. Catch him on Twitter at @agtutty, or email atutty@sheridans.co.uk. **www.sheridans.co.uk**

Grow your own studio

Seven years ago Mediatonic was little more than a bold idea. CEO **David Bailey** details how his team turned that dream into a thriving business offering a 'games as a service' model and making titles filled with character

EVERYONE CAN TAKE PART
We're here
HYUNDAI
SAMSUNG

BACK IN 2005, Paul Croft and myself decided to start a games business. At that time we were still at university, running out of lectures to take important calls.

Now, Mediatonic has grown to span two offices, based in London and Brighton, which will between them house 100 staff within the next year. We've attracted investment from some of the biggest names in games, including Ian Livingstone OBE and Geoff Heath OBE.

We've gone from being a company that made standalone Flash games to a complete 'games as a service' provider, and we're working with truly global partners on long-term partnerships.

Having been through it, we know that starting a business is one of the most exhilarating, exhausting and rewarding things you can do.

We've learnt a huge amount across these seven years, so here are a few pieces of advice for anyone else thinking of taking the plunge and forming a start-up.

BUILD TRACTION EARLY

You want your business to be a success, so it's understandable that you might want to get out there straight away and pitch for work.

Never underestimate the value of having something already completed, even if it's not particularly commercial. It's extremely difficult to have a practical sales conversation without having something that can back up your claims; something that can prove your capability and expertise.

We had to sink a lot of effort into that – a lot of effort that you won't directly earn any money from – but it's vital to put in the groundwork in order to secure business going forward.

TARGET YOUR NETWORKING

The best way to get work-for-hire business is with face-to-face meetings, so pick a few conferences and really work them. You'll need to budget some cash for this, but done properly the returns will make up for it.

Also, make sure that the conferences you pick in the early days will get you time with the people who can actually commission product – networking with peers definitely has its value, but people who are in a similar situation to you are much less likely to be able to give you the work you need.

CASH IS KING

This sounds like rather basic advice, but always watch your cash flow like a hawk. We did financial reports every Friday without fail – what came in, what went out, what was left, what was projected.

It can be tempting to focus on more fancy accounting, but basic cash flow management is really, really critical for start-ups, whatever your focus – big clients can take up to 90 days to pay once your milestones are approved or your royalties become due.

STRIKE WHILE THE IRON'S HOT

The easiest time to start a business is when you have nothing to lose. For example, when we founded Mediatonic we were at university, so we didn't already have jobs and incomes that we would have to give up in order to set-up our studio.

The longer you leave it, the more money you'll be making and the more friction you'll need to overcome to make the jump to setting up your own studio.

NEVER LET UP ON QUALITY

There's definitely value in getting yourself out there and known – appearing at conferences, writing blogs, and so on – but at the end of the day you will always be judged on the quality of your work.

It can be tempting to spend a lot of effort on this side of the business, and to see it as publicity work, but your reputation will rest far more on what you've made than on your speaking appearances. Doing this networking will certainly help you generate leads, but ultimately any deal will hinge around your previous output when it comes to the due diligence stage.

In fact, there's definitely something to be said for working even harder than normal to over-deliver on your early projects. That's because everything you're working on right now is what you'll use to get to the next level, business-wise, when you're looking for your next contract. That makes it some of the most important work you'll ever undertake.

We've always focused on making the very best product we can, rather than having a better margin, because running a studio is a long-term game – even if you might feel the pinch in the short-term.

Mediatonic CEO **Dave Bailey** co-founded his studio seven years ago, overseeing its transition to focus solely on digital games in 2008, the successful spin-out of an independent media agency in 2009, and raised Angel and VC Investment rounds at the company in 2010 and 2012 respectively.
www.mediatonicgames.com

Today the Mediatonic team (main image) has grown vastly, compared to its humble origins when co-founder David Bailey (above) was just a student.

A figure of funds

Looking for funding? UKIE CEO **Jo Twist** takes a look at a number of options available to start-up studios

UKIE CEO Jo Twist (above) and, one of Abertay University's games development facilities (right)

WE KNOW FROM speaking to our developer members in particular that getting access to money can be a major barrier to starting up a new business.

Yet whilst it remains difficult, there are willing investors out there, pots of public money available and schemes in place that can be a major help. One of our jobs at UKIE is to make sure our members know how to access any available money and here's some of the main ones that all fledgling businesses should be aware of.

ABERTAY PROTOTYPE FUNDING

The prototype lab and centre of excellence at Abertay University (a UKIE member) encourages small developers across the UK to apply for grants of up to £25,000 to support the development of prototypes. They often launch competitions with different partners – we are going to do one with them, for instance – which ask for specific ideas that might be solving a problem or a challenge for someone. This is a great way to get a new idea that might have legs off the ground.
www.prototypefund.abertay.ac.uk/funding

BUSINESS ANGELS

Business angels are private individuals who can club together and look for interesting start-up businesses with great ideas.

The amount invested by angels can vary but typically it can be between £25,000 to £750,000. Angels are often successful business people, who can also lend you their experience and networks, like mini mentors.

Angels can include family or friends of the start-up who want to help get a company off the ground. You should also make sure any Angel investors that you do work with use the SEIS scheme (see link below).
www.bbaa.org.uk

CROWDFUNDING

More people are discovering crowdfunding to fund their projects. Crowdfunding tests the appetite for your games, giving you a handy armoury of metrics such as 'likes' for an idea to present to potential investors, commissioners or publishers. The term is used to refer to three different methods of raising funds – think about which best suits your needs.

Donations model: People give money to a company or project either for no return or in return for some form of non-financial reward (a pre-order, a credit in the game, or a jolly with the developers).

Lending model: Investors provide money through a loan with a requirement that the loan is repaid with interest.

Equity investment model: Investors provide money in return for a share of equity in your business.

There are more than 40 crowdfunding platforms operating in the UK and many others across the world, some specialising in games, like Gambitious and Indiegogo. Most operate on a donations or loans basis but a few have obtained permission to operate an equity model.
www.indiegogo.com | www.kickstarter.com
www.gambitious.com

PRODUCTION TAX CREDITS

These aren't in place yet, but from next April the UK's games industry should have its own long-awaited tax breaks system in place. We've been helping the Government to understand that the new scheme must support all kinds of games and sizes of businesses so they stoke growth from small and/or independent developers, existing bigger studios and inward investment from multinational companies. Make sure you know when it launches, and make sure that you use it as much as you can. We'll be giving practical help on the tax credits, so please get in touch if you need help.

PUBLISHING

Publishers are still a major source of investment in games and interactive entertainment. They also provide essential skills to get a game to market. UKIE represents all the main publishers currently in the UK, as well as some of the newer kinds of publishers emerging which specialise in mobile games, so if you want to speak to a publisher drop **sam.collins@ukie.org.uk** a line.

R&D TAX RELIEF

The Government's Research and Development (R&D) scheme gives tax deductions to UK companies doing R&D. Lots of games businesses do R&D, sometimes without realising it.

UKIE members can get free advice from R&D tax specialists Jumpstart about how R&D tax credits can benefit their businesses by emailing: **ukie@jumpstartuk.co.uk**

SEED ENTERPRISE INVESTMENT SCHEME

This is not a pot of money, but is a very good incentive for people who want to invest in your business. The Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme (SEIS) only launched this year, and is designed to help small, early-stage businesses to raise money by offering them a range of tax reliefs to individual investors.

Here at UKIE we've created a games businesses guide to SEIS, available at **www.ukie.info/content/ukie-briefing-sheet-seed-enterprise-investment-scheme**. Or you can visit **www.hmrc.gov.uk/seedeis/index.htm**

Jo Twist is CEO of UKIE, a trade body for the UK's interactive entertainment industry, which exists to champion the interests, needs and positive image of all those across the video games and interactive entertainment industry.
www.ukie.info

And they're off...

FormerDroid have made incredibly quick progress for such a new team. The outfit formed at a game jam earlier this year, and already together they've made a BAFTA-nominated game. **Fee Stewart** reveals how they did it, and how you can too

WHEN I BEGAN training to become a games developer, my long-term goal was to set up my own studio.

What I didn't realise, however, was that it would happen so quickly after embarking on a career change.

This time last year I was still studying with Train2Game, alongside some of the guys who would go on to create FormerDroid with me. At the time I was studying in my home town of Holmfirth and completing a work placement with Radiation Burn in Middlesbrough, which involved me travelling up to the North East two days a week. Little did I know the experience I gained at Radiation Burn would stand me in good stead when I came to establish my own independent studio less than a year later.

COMING TOGETHER

This year a group of the students from Train2Game and various other universities decided to take part in the 2012 Global Game Jam in Scotland. It was a great opportunity for us to work collaboratively with people with different skill sets, and also collectively trial a range of ideas. As digital art students, we were able to work with programmers to help bring our ideas to life. Two of the programmers that we worked with at the event ended up becoming members of FormerDroid.

Over the course of the event we developed the XNA-based game *Shplem*, which won the category of Best Art in Game and the IGDA playtest award. The game was also nominated for Best Tech, and the FormerDroid team for Best New Talent, at this year's BAFTA awards. While we did not end up scooping the prize, the nomination made us realise that we had something special on our hands, both in terms of the game and the team's collective talent.

It was at this point that we started seriously considering setting up our own studio and developing *Shplem* beyond the XNA version. While we were technically proficient, thanks to our time studying with Train2Game, we lacked the business acumen to establish ourselves as a functioning studio.

We were not short of creativity, and I had faith that there was a pool of ideas that could form the basis of further games, but we needed a business structure in place to allow us to do that.

Coming from an artistic background, the legal and financial side of business were unfamiliar to me. Registering the company with the tax office, coming to grips with corporation tax, and transferring the IP rights for *Shplem* over to FormerDroid have been among the low-lights. But they are an important part of creating your own studio.

WINDOWS OF OPPOTUNITY

More recently we have become involved with Microsoft's BizSpark programme. For a company like ours the level of support we have received has been fantastic. When I first met with Microsoft I was still smarting from some of the bruising encounters all businesses go through at the early stages and so naturally I was rather cautious. However, they have given us the tools to build on what we already had and establish ourselves as a studio.

BizSpark has provided us with software licensing for the next three years. As well as the money this saves us as a business, it also means that everyone is working on Windows 8 and has access to a uniform suite of software. When you are working collaboratively, that makes things a lot easier.

Bizspark also gives us access to an incredibly broad business community, including fellow tech start-ups. As the new guys, it can feel like you are the only ones struggling against the tide. Being able to speak with people who have overcome similar problems allows us to benefit from collective experience and reassures us that not every one of the challenges we face is unique to us.

As for *Shplem* we have switched platform from iOS and are now developing the game primarily for Windows 8. We are close to completion and hope that Shplem will launch ahead of Christmas, which would have been unlikely had we not made the decision to change platform.

We still have a long way to go and one *Shplem* does not a summer make, or something along those lines. But we have always believed in ourselves as a creative force. Train2Game and the evolutionary process we went through at game jams has provided us with the technical skills to turn that into something tangible. Now we are confident we have the structure in place to really establish our business.

Fee Stewart is MD and co-founder of FormerDroid, and works for Radiationburn.net and Gogo-Robot Games. She is a trained artist with a wealth of experience in the games sector.
www.formerdroid.com

The FormerDroid team (inset), some of whom met at this year's Scottish Game Jam (main image), including MD Fee Stewart (above)

Do-it-yourself publishing

TIGA's **Richard Wilson** offers a wealth of advice on self-publishing, setting up shop for the first time and where you can go to secure help in sharing your latest and greatest games with the world

TIGA CEO Richard Wilson (above), and a TIGA event conceived to help games developers, including start-ups (right)

STARTING AND BUILDING a sustainable new studio is no easy feat.

Research conducted by GIC and TIGA shows that between 2008 and 2011, 216 new games companies entered the UK games industry, but there were also 197 closures.

Yet despite the high studio mortality rate, this is a great time to begin a new venture. Self-publishers today have considerable choice, with the number of platforms that cater well for independent developers, from the App Store to Google Play, being greater than ever before.

Certainly, there is more to development than producing the actual game. While this is the most important focus for a studio, to ensure success and to secure the funds to continue development, a studio needs to rely on a mix of marketing, PR, advertising, localisation, bug testing, age ratings, end user support, taxation and focus testing.

One of the first mistakes a studio can make is to be over ambitious. You really need to work within your means. Starting a games company and dashing headlong into creating a triple-A title is not going to be possible for the vast majority of new studios. Making use of open platforms and building a reputation and cash reserves is usually more sensible and this can work to your advantage. Independent games development is a space in which you can experiment. Try to take on *Call of Duty* and you're likely to be disappointed; produce a quirky title that brings something new to the gaming space and you are likely to be far more successful.

START AS YOU MEAN TO GO ON

Ensuring your games business gets off to the right start is crucial. TIGA can help. Many of our members are self-publishers and have considerable experience of owning and managing a studio: we can share this collective expertise to help new start-ups that are self-publishing. TIGA provides professional business advice for new start-ups, including our Self-Publishing Guide to all of its members and a mentoring service. We also reduce developers' costs via discounts and are working to secure an effective Games Tax Relief which will reduce the cost of games development. TIGA also organises networking events to enable developers to build business relationships.

Networking is crucial. Developers need to reach out to customers and to each other and being in close proximity helps enormously. Networking is vital for tapping into fresh ideas and talent which can help make a game a success, and it is why TIGA stages networking events across the UK throughout the year.

This makes one of the first decisions a studio will make even more crucial: where to base your company. Location can be important, with the most successful studios being based around the creative UK clusters of games studios that can be found in Guildford, Brighton, London, Dundee, Edinburgh, Sheffield, Leeds, Newcastle, Liverpool, Manchester, Cambridge, Oxford, Leamington Spa and Birmingham.

But some independent developers decide to cut costs and set up their company in a bedroom or home study. This is often the cheapest route and it does not mean you have to compromise. It is easy to present a professional front with a good website. Free blog software makes setting up a website a trivial task and it is easy to get the message out about your game via social network sites such as Facebook and Twitter. You can work together with colleagues remotely using instant messaging, Dropbox and Sugarsync.

PLENUM DOUBT

Whichever route you decide, the crucial thing is not to operate in a vacuum. The danger is that developers stay in those small rooms and don't talk to other people in the industry and that is because being around like-minded people is of the utmost importance.

Networking offers the advantages of sharing knowledge, ideas and engaging in collaboration. Networking can be the bridge for small studios which have to set up in a bedroom or home study.

Events such as the Develop conferences are important. TIGA's events prove popular. Our Battle of the Platforms: Self-Publishing Conference was a day which discussed the issues facing those already self-publishing or considering it. It focused on the benefits of different platforms and the challenges involved in creating a cross-platform game from an early stage.

TIGA's GameDev Nights are also great get-togethers where the emphasis is on learning and networking, with ample time for people to get to know other developers and understand the skills they have which may prove useful for your own venture.

The message is clear then: don't operate in isolation. When you start your new business, learn from others. Network, talk, listen and understand. You need to make both yourselves and your games known and seize every opportunity to showcase both your talent and your creative endeavours.

Richard Wilson is CEO of video games industry trade body TIGA, which is devoted to making the UK the best place in the world to do games business.
www.tiga.org

The tech accelerator experience

Playmob's **Jude Ower** knows a thing or two about tech accelerators – her company thrived having particapted in one. Here she looks at the value of getting help building up speed

Ower's top tips for accelerator success

- If there are a lot of unknowns or you are trying to achieve a certain scale or market, then an accelerator is right for you

- Know exactly what you want to get out of it, and always have this in your mind when meeting with your mentors

- Keep track of all the feedback you get or your head will explode. We kept a daily spreadsheet of feedback and then watched for consistent themes. These themes were the parts we focused on

- Understand what your business is lacking and utilise the programme to fill those gaps

- Support and ask for support from the other teams – a year on from our time on Springboard, we still keep an active email group with the other teams

IF YOU'RE THINKING about a business model which is new, innovative and needing some refinement, a technology accelerator is a great catalyst to quickly getting onto the right track, or not.

An accelerator is not for everyone, it really depends on the business and its needs. If there is an option to do one, check it out thoroughly. Who is running it, what is their background, and more importantly, what do you want to get out of it?

For us it made sense as we were changing the business from building games as a service, to considering being a middleware developer. The decision came about when we had charities ask if we could build games for them which taught players about causes, but also raised money. We loved this concept, and wanted to work out a philanthro-capitalist model to create a sustainable business with 'doing good' at its core.

A SENSE OF SCALE

We had two options: we could raise finance for a suite of games, or build a toolkit for developers to connect to causes directly. After review, the platform model was going to be the most scalable to help us reach our objective of 'doing good through games'. But because this had not been done before, there were a lot of unknowns and lessons to be learned, and participating in tech accelerator Springboard seemed to be the ideal solution to learn quick and fail/succeed fast.

Springboard is a 13-week programme split into mentoring, development, testing and pitching. We applied the business into Springboard, along with 300 other companies, and after submitting an application and various interviews, we were one of the lucky ten selected to participate in the program.

We had to spend 13 weeks in Cambridge, where the first accelerator was based. Each company was given an investment of £15k in return for six per cent equity. But for us, it was not the funds that were the driver, it was the mentoring, support and being able to test the market and ensure we were testing the right things, in a set time frame, and quickly. In the first four weeks we met over 100 mentors, including serial entrepreneurs who really helped us dissect our platform. Every wall in our temporary home in Cambridge was covered in whiteboard paper, covered in diagrams of our tech. knowing where to start was difficult.

THE BUILD UP

After the mentoring we moved into the 'build phase'. Here we developed a prototype of what our platform could be and connected it with a game to demo how it could work. It was nothing fancy and was nowhere near the final product, but it gave us a pilot to test.

In the final phase we met a pitch coach. She worked with us to initially get us to pitch so she understood our businesses.

At the start of the process I could easily say I had the worst pitch in terms of getting the messaging clear and succinct, and by the end of the process we had an investment offer on the table, and also won a competition the next month for 'Best Pitch' at the European Entrepreneurs Festival in London.

The whole experience was an incredible one, and one I feel got our business focused, on track and ready to make a leap forward.

Jude Ower has spent 10 years working within the games industry, creating games for training and education. Devoted to raising awareness of causes through gameplay, and to helping charities to raise funds through games, Ower set up PlayMob. **www.playmob.com**

Playmob's Jude Ower (above), took part in an accelorator program (main image), not for investment, but for mentoring, support and market testing

Start-up your engines

Trevor Williams has founded three studios in his career, and as such has gained a vast experience of the finer points of establishing a business. Here he shares his most essential advice for those considering building up a new studio

Playground Games' Trevor Williams (above) who heads up a studio currently enjoying glowing reviews of its recent racer Forza Horizon (top), developed with partner Turn 10 Studios

RUNNING YOUR OWN company is an exercise in managing and dealing with extremes – both operationally and emotionally. It's a real rollercoaster ride.

You have to drag your way through the tough times, sometimes fighting and scraping to stay alive, but at the same time trying not to become so jaded that you cannot enjoy the highs. I think it would be fair to say that pretty much every start-up experiences both extremes, even if the high is just enjoying the freedom to make your own decisions.

I am lucky enough to be one of the founders and directors at Playground Games. We have just finished our first game – *Forza Horizon*. Our review embargo lifted recently and the scores started dropping in. *IGN* gave it nine-out-of-ten; *Eurogamer* the same. And then an email popped in from Alan Hartman who runs Turn 10 Studios – our partner.

It told us that *GiantBomb* had given us five-out-of-five. *Forza Horizon* received more than ten 90 per cent-plus reviews in the first 24 hours. Our Twitter feed was alive with congratulations and plaudits. We were delighted. We had worked incredibly hard on that game.

So what makes a successful start-up? I've been involved in founding three studios, and they were all very different.

BE REASONABLE

I think the first thing I would say is that starting up your own company is not for everyone. Just because you can doesn't mean you should. Getting a new company off the ground is bloody hard work and the line between success and failure is wafer thin. I think it was Napoleon who said 'give me lucky generals'. He wasn't wrong. The difference between success and failure can often be nothing more than a bit of luck.

And having a good idea is usually not enough. You need to be able to execute and embed that idea within a business – or at least convince your potential funders.

In fact, starting up a games company doesn't have to be driven at all by having a great game idea. It is often about knowing what you are good at and then selling that as a service. Even if your ideal is to make your own games, lots of very credible businesses start out as outsourcers and then use that as a base to develop their own titles.

If you are trying to secure external funding to start your business then you will need a more formal business plan. You may be able to get help putting that together, but the core business premise has to come from you, the founders.

We funded Playground with our own money – trying to convince investors to put cash into a console development business was pretty difficult.

Although our team had a phenomenal pedigree, it was difficult to predict our success – and the new disruptive business models were more interesting for investors.

And be prepared to deal with some areas with which you may have had very little experience – particularly finance and legals. You will spend more time than you ever thought possible thinking, worrying and dreaming about money, cashflows and those the people you owe money to – the creditors.

If you thought car dealers were experts in what some call 'man maths', just wait until you start your own company.

TOP TIPS

I feel like I have only just got started and I have already blown my word count. I know, I talk too much. So to finish, just a couple of quick bits of advice:

Get a good lawyer and set your company and contracts up properly. This is easy to sweep under the table at the beginning, but dealing with it later can be difficult and messy. If you are doing development deals, use a solicitor with games experience. We use John Schorah – who is all kinds of awesome – but Paul Gardner and Alex Chapman both have excellent reputations too.

Look after your staff. Your staff are your lifeblood. Anyone can buy the kit and rent an office; the guys who actually produce the games are what make games development companies special.

If you are looking to recruit staff, consider running some ads as well as partnering with agencies. You may remember those *somewhat* annoying bright blue covers we ran on *Develop* about a year ago? They were extremely effective and when we rationalised the cost, they were a fraction of the equivalent agency fees.

Above all, try to enjoy it. Be proud and appreciate everything you achieve. We are extremely proud of both Playground Games and our first game *Forza Horizon*. We have a talented team of 82 people, a great office, bleeding-edge kit and an extremely supportive partner in Turn 10 Studios. We took a risk, but it was considered and we are now enjoying the success.

Good luck with your own start-up.

Trevor Williams is Playground Games chief operating officer. An industry veteran with prolific experience, he has previously served at Codemasters, Activision, Vivendi, Swordfish, Rage and Elite Systems. **www.playground-games.com**

Building a foundation

Lauri Antalainen is co-founder of GameFounders, Europe's first game-specific accelerator. Here he looks at what start-up Bad Seed gained from taking part in the initiative, and offers advice from the host perspective

gamefounders.com

GAMEFOUNDERS is the first accelerator in Europe that only accepts gaming and gamification start-ups.

Located in Tallinn, Estonia, the first batch of GameFounders has six teams from six different countries – Argentina, Estonia, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania and the Netherlands – selected from 122 applicants. The first batch is half through: it started in the beginning of September, and the Demo Days – the events where the start-ups pitch to follow-up investors and publishers – will be held at the beginning of December.

One of the participating gaming studios is Bad Seed Entertainment from Italy. The team of seven used to work at Ubisoft but then felt that they wanted to create their own games. So they quit to found their own studio and create games that they'd really like to play themselves. They have already launched an awesome game *Sheep Up!* for iOS, and are also working on a couple of other titles.

The co-founder of Bad Seed, Roberto Magniafico, says that as soon as they found out about GameFounders they knew that it is the boost they were looking for. The extra value added by having gaming-specific mentors was the thing that made GameFounders just that much more attractive than the other accelerators. In fact, the opportunity to meet such high caliber people from the gaming industry was the main reason why all seven members of their team decided to leave their lives in Italy and move to Estonia for three months.

THE BUSINESS OF LEARNING

In the first half of the programme Magniafico and his colleagues have learned even more than they expected. Being technical people, most of the learning has come from the marketing and business side. "Just as we expected, we have learned how to pitch to investors and introduce our game and team, and quite a lot about how to market it. We have also changed our business model in the process." More surprisingly though, they have also learned a lot about game development. "For example, back in Italy we did not turn any attention on player behavior, such as where they get stuck and leave the game. Now we have started to do that and have made quite a few changes on game dynamics, mainly making the first levels much simpler than they used to be."

Bad Seed's expectations for the second half of the programme and the Demo Days are high. "We have already met many potential investors and publishers and we are still in active communication with them. Whenever we have a game update, we send it to them and receive useful feedback. This kind of connection helps us make sure that we attract the follow-up financing after the programme is over."

And over it will be in less than two months. While the first month was spent mainly meeting games industry experts – sometimes five-to-six a day – now the emphasis is on putting the things learned into the games, and then preparing and fine tuning the pitches to publishers and investors. The next Demo Days will take place on November 16th in Tallinn, November 22nd at Slush in Helsinki, November 29th at Game Connection in Paris and December 10th in San Francisco. Thus there's a lot of potential to raise the follow-up investment.

TALKING TALLINN

Magniafico likes the venue and Tallinn, too.

"Tallinn is great," he says. "It is not nearly as cold and rainy as we thought. It is clean, full of young people, there's lots of things to do and everybody speaks English. Best of all, it is much cheaper than Italy and this is really important when you have seven people in the team". During his stay in Tallinn he has already made a bunch of new friends, lots of them from the other teams. "We are like one big community. At work, everybody is eager to help others out and, at weekends, we go to clubs and pubs together. That is really great".

GameFounders has just opened the applications for the second batch. Studios can apply at www.gamefounders.com/#/apply with a deadline in the beginning of December.

"I would definitely recommend applying," concludes Magniafico. "It would take years of trial and error to learn the things that you learn here in just a few months. It would take even longer to build up such a contact network".

And Magniafico has some tips for games developers who want to come to Tallinn to join GameFounders: "Keep an open mind. You will meet a lot of high caliber mentors. Be opened to their suggestions, even if you don't agree in the first place. Bear in mind, no one is perfect; you are here to learn. Be ready to change your vision, but keep the personality". ■

Some of the first group to pass through a GameFounders program (top), and the initiative's co-founder, Lauri Antalainen (above)

Co-founder **Lauri Antalainen** manages the everyday life of the GameFounder game accelerator, expands the mentor network and partnership deals, and connects start-ups to suitable mentors.
www.gamefounders.com

DO YOU KNOW DIGITAL?

PARTNERS GET:

- Mini Presentation Slot ✓
- Dedicated Networking Area ✓
- Delegate Speed Meetings ✓
- Integrated Editorial Plan ✓
- Free delegate allocation ✓

OPENING KEYNOTE

Phil Harrison.
Corporate Vice President, Interactive Entertainment Business, Microsoft EMEA

DO YOU KNOW DIGITAL?

DELEGATES GET:

- Influential Speaker Insights ✓
- Practical advice ✓
- Networking drinks and dinner ✓
- Discovery case studies ✓
- Exclusive take-away data ✓

DELEGATE RATE £269

Digital Discovery and Distribution for Games:

What Works and What's Next

Wednesday November 21st 2012, 3.15pm - 11pm

One Wimpole Street, 1 Wimpole Street, London W1G 0AE

www.londongamesconference.com

Platinum Partner

meteor ENTERTAINMENT

Gold Partners

6W QINQO Microsoft

Partner

HEAVENMEDIA

Media Partners

MCV develop

In association with

ukie TIGA Representing the Games Industry GAMEREPUBLIC

> You'll leave the London Games Conference with smart insights, actionable advice and new contacts.
>
> *James Binns, Conference Chairman*

CONFIRMED SPEAKERS

Jo Twist
UKIE

Warren Mills
Google

Mark Turpin
Yogscast

Sean Decker
Play4Free

Rich Keen
IGN

Simon Little
ISFE

Nick Button-Brown
Crytek

John Clark
Sega

Matt Carroll
Disney

Mark Reed
Heaven Media

Roger Walkden
EA Origin

Nicholas Lovell
Gamesbrief

Barclay Deeming
Natural Motion

Bruce Daisley
Twitter

Mark Long
Meteor

3.15pm	4.00pm - 8.00pm	8.00pm - 11.00pm
Registration	Conference	Networking and buffet

lgc london games conference 2012

Partnership: To ensure your brand is part of the London Games Conference please contact Lesley Blumson on 01992 535647 or email: lesley.blumson@intentmedia.co.uk

Delegate Places (strictly limited):
Contact:Hannah Short on 01992 535647
or email: hannah.short@intentmedia.co.uk

Lessons learned

Do games developers and journalists really understand one another? The JournoDevSwap game jam set out to see just how much hacks know about coding and whether devs can get a scoop, as **Will Freeman** found out

Student coders from the University of Derby at UKIE headquarters in Soho, London, for the first ever JournoDevSwap (main), and event winners Keith Stuart and Theo Chin collecting their award (right)

AROUND A CONFERENCE table sit a number of games industry piers, hunched at computers and wired on caffeine. The small hours are upon them, as this gathering of creators from different companies work together coding games far later than is sensible. They have less than a day until deadline, and are living off convenience foods and takeaways.

This is, of course, a familiar setting. It's a 48-hour game jam, and eight teams are in the thick of it. But something is different here. Four established games journalists, assisted by student coders from Derby University, are making the games. Meanwhile, four developers are covering the event as press, posting stories to *Develop*'s own website.

Welcome to JournoDevSwap.

EYE OPENING

The idea for the event was conceived by developer-turned-consultant Will Luton, who attended this year's GDC as a *Develop* columnist. The work opened his eyes to games journalism; an experience he felt worth sharing.

And so it was that JournoDevSwap came to be, with significant input from UKIE CEO Jo Twist, and a little help from team *Develop*. The contest challenged games developers and games journalists – two groups that don't always see eye-to-eye – to swap roles in a game jam context. The idea was to stimulate thinking about the relationship the two share, shed some light on each disciplines' skillset, and maybe even enhance each contestant's perspective within their day job.

Immediately as the event started, one thing was clear; the teams were taking this seriously on both sides of the JournoDevSwap fence. A sense of joviality also prevailed, as did the atmosphere of mutual support prevalent at so many game jams, but the contestants at this event were clearly set on proving they could fill the shoes of their 'rivals'.

The structure was simple. Each journalist – Keith Stuart from *The Guardian*, *RockPaperShotgun*'s Dan Griliopoplus, Lewie Proctor of *RPS* and *Savvy Gamer*, and *CVG*'s Rob Crossley – would tackle making a game around the theme of 'Swap'. They were not totally alone, however, assisted as they were by the talented aforementioned student coders from Derby, Karn Bianco, Jake Woodruff, Chris Barnes, Luc Shelton, Kevin Chandler, Theo Chin and David Jones.

Meanwhile, each games developer – namely Spilt Milk's Andrew Smith, Peter Theophilus-Bevis from Blitz Games, Mark Backler, then with Lionhead, and Jim Griffiths from Mediatonic – were set a series of deadlines throughout the weekend. They were tasked with the likes of conducting interviews, penning previews, securing exclusive stories, and publishing them for real to www.develop-online.net.

And there was significant motivation for all involved to graft hard; JournoDevSwap

trophies for the developer-cum-journalist deemed most successful by a *Develop* panel, and for the writer-turned-dev selected by a group of industry experts including Miles Jacobson of studio Sports Interactive.

HEADS DOWN

As the event progressed, it became clear how much the jam was beginning to mean to the attendees. Brows furrowed across the room in the hosting UKIE office.

"I think what was significant was the willingness in the room," says Luton. "Everyone embraced the spirit of the event and was extremely respectful – with exception to the night me and Keith Stuart got drunk and kept everyone awake by shouting at people on Chat Roulette. Without wanting to sound trite, it was a very special time, which I feel people will look back upon as significant in their careers."

As for what the attendees are set to gain from taking part in the event, Twist believes its not simply a matter of learning about life on the opposite side of the journalist-developer divide, but in fact about better understanding creativity in a broader context.

"I think they have all taken away an acute appreciation of the challenges, stresses and the enormous creativity that goes into making – whether than be making a game, artwork, making an idea express itself, or something interesting to read," says Twist, who adds that it's not just the job-swapping attendees that are set to gain.

"The Derby University coders were brilliant," she asserts. "They have taken away a really special insight into how established developers and journalists think and work – and they have realised that they are actually normal people too."

IN IT TO WIN IT

In the end, the accolade for best game went to Stuart and his coding partner Chin, for their dual-play, auto-running game *Double Droids*. Meanwhile, Backler scooped the award for best journalist at the event, picked for his focus, clean writing style and success with hitting deadlines.

"I really didn't expect this," said Backler, taking to an improvised stage to accept his award. "All the writing this weekend was great, and everybody has put in so much effort. It's been really good to see what all the journalists and developers have put in."

More important, perhaps, than the winners, are the lessons learned at JournoDevSwap, which were many (see panel 'Lessons learned'). From informing their perspective of the other side of the industry, to embracing learnings that can be applied to their day job, all involved seemed convinced the investment of 48 hours – and the loss of sleep – was worthwhile, even if some called to be pushed harder next time.

> ***"They have all taken away an acute appreciation of the challenges, stresses and creativity that goes into making."***
>
> Jo Twist, UKIE

And there will be a next time, as Twist explains. "It was such an open, friendly, sharing atmosphere and we want to do more," she says. "I think it shone a spotlight on what lovely, creative people we have already in our industry, and what incredibly talented young people are coming through the ranks. These are the people who are going to be defining the future of the games industry and we must nurture them and help them where we can. Every part of the games and interactive entertainment industry needs to be foster and that's what we at UKIE are here for. With Will Luton's help, we are going to replicate and extend this format of swap jams into new areas so watch this space."

JournoDevSwap will return, so take Twist's advice, and keep an eye on *Develop* for details of the next event. Maybe you can even take part. ■ *See full coverage of JournoDevSwap on* **www.develop-online.net**

JournoDevSwap contestants reveal what they gained from the experience

"There's been something – especially when tackling the opinion piece I wrote – of having a new understanding of the process of ordering information. I've learned that the process of writing – of journalism – offers a solid model for ordering information, which is a really great thing to have in your toolbox as a producer or a games writer."

Jim Griffith, Mediatonic

"It's been really interesting for me to see Unity, as a lot of developers talk to me about Unity, and tell me all the ways it's great, and I've always nodded along, and tried to make out like I know what they're talking about. But now I've spent some time with my student partner here and worked with him as he uses Unity, I've seen how it works and seen how it takes in data to construct games. Now I see why it is so popular."

Keith Stuart, The Guardian

"Watching the games press and the journalists work in the same room like this, it's made me realise that having a closer relationship with the press isn't such a bad thing. There's a lot to be gained from working together an appreciating what each of us does."

Mark Backler, Lionhead

"This has made me realise how simple ideas can be very difficult to implement into a game, because a completely different language is required. There's so many laws that have to be rewritten to accept the smallest changes, and I'd not appreciated that before. That's been really enlightening for me; turning ideas into games is not as straight forward as you might think."

Rob Crossley, CVG

"I've realised that journalists do a much harder job than people appreciate, but then so do us developers. On the one hand, you've got the fact that games journalism looks like a pretty sweet deal from the outside; this has made me realise that's not the full picture. And then, when you're used to doing something, like making games, it's easy to underestimate the level of work you put into it until you see somebody else attempting it. That puts it in context. So this has been twofold for me. It's made me appreciate what journalists do, and what I do."

Andrew Smith, Spilt Milk Studio

Develop would like to extend its thanks to UKIE for hosting this event, the University of Derby students without whom JournoDevSwap would not have flown so smoothly, all the UKIE staff involved, the judges, and Will Luton and Jo Twist for making it happen. Additional thanks go to the developers and journalists involved, and Mark Backler and Cat Burton, who provided the photographs you see on these pages.

Celebrate the best in mobile gaming at the ME Awards 2012

The Mobile Content Industry's Premier Awards Event

This year's categories include:

Best Games Publisher ● Best Games Developer
Best Social Games Service Provider ● Best Pay By Mobile Company
Best Games Monetisation Company ● Best Cross-Platform Tools Provider
Best PR Agency ● Best Recruitment Agency

…and many more

Award Partner
onebip

Award Partner
OpenMarket

Award Partner
powered by twilio™

meawards

Thursday, November 29th 2012 · The Royal Garden Hotel · London

To buy tickets go to www.me-awards.com/buy-tickets
Alternatively contact Katy.Phillips@intentmedia.co.uk or call +44 (0) 1992 535647

For all sponsorship enquiries please contact
Katy.Phillips@intentmedia.co.uk or call +44 (0) 1992 535647

www.me-awards.com

High hopes

Wish Studios is a new developer with bold aspirations. And its debuted with a high-profile Sony deal. **Will Freeman** catches up with two of its founders to wish upon a star

The men behind the dream factory (left-to-right): Caspar Field, Paul Brooke and Tom Bennett

YOU MAY NOT have heard of Wish Studios a month ago.

Quietly the newly formed developer's three founders have built up their studio, brokered a huge deal with a major publisher and are now poised to step fully into the limelight.

The deal was announced moments before the printer responsible for the magazine you now hold in your hands was fired up to speed, and is a significant agreement, still draped in mystery. In short – for details are sparse – it is a partnership with Sony.

For now, all that is known is that Wish CEO Caspar Field, along with CCO Tom Bennett and CTO Paul Brooke, are working on prototyping new IP for the platform holder. And that's it.

But while the team behind Wish may be keeping the project a secret for now, they are ready to talk about the creative approach they hope will define their studio. The founding trio at one point worked together at Relentless Software, and have some 40 years of experience making games behind them, with particular expertise in the realms of augmented reality and motion control.

And its focus, says Field, is not on platforms or business models, but on something far more fundamental to the process of making video games.

WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?

"With the huge proliferation of platforms there is these days, Wish is focusing on great ideas," explains Field. "We really want to make that the core of what we're about. Really all these things that are circling around the industry at the moment, in terms of those platforms and business models; all of those things are really just great ways of getting good ideas out there. I think people talk a lot about all that stuff and forget that ideas are what is important, and all that is nothing without those ideas."

> ***"We have a great belief in the shared experience of gaming. We ourselves have a regular games night where we play together."***
>
> Caspar Field, Wish Studios

To Wish, concepts like smart TV, second screens, monetisation and digital distribution are in essence a single entity; a vehicle to deliver ideas. What's more, the new ecosystem of the games development sector gives these veterans of production and design a new opportunity, as Bennett details.

"We've all had lots of experience of doing these big games with little risk, but now we have all these technologies we can be a little braver and bolder with our ideas," he confirms. "We'd all started to look at doing that over the past few years, and as we realised how well we worked together and how quickly ideas are generated between us, it became apparent we had to set up Wish."

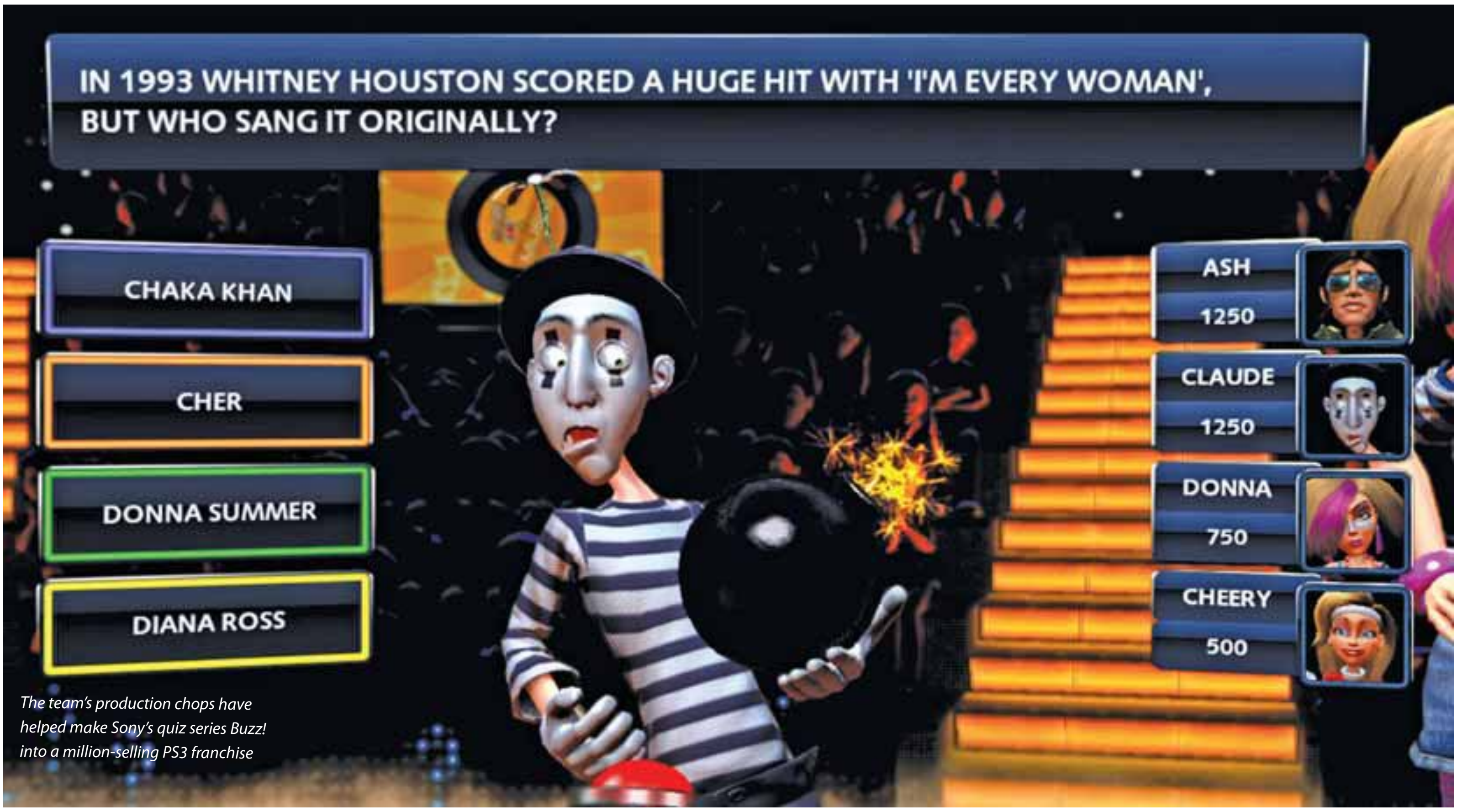
STARTING AFRESH

And so it was. After a project at Relentless wound down, a window of opportunity to breakaway and start afresh presented itself, and so the colleagues pounced, and are now building a model that will allow them to work on both client and internal projects.

"We've got loads of ideas and loads we want to do, and some really specific areas of expertise, so we feel we can just take work that feels right for us as a group," says Field.

"We do have lots of expertise in motion control and augmented reality, and we've worked across loads of very different platforms. We particularly have a great belief in the shared experience of gaming. We ourselves have a regular games night where we get together and play proper multiplayer games where you share the experience together in the same room. I think that's important and I think there's a lot of people who still want that classic multiplayer feel."

All this talk of new ideas is very encouraging, but it's immediately apparent that Wish face a significant challenge. Capturing the spirit of a near-bygone era of games design while focusing on revolutionary ideas and a diverse range of modern platforms will take something of a miraculous balancing act. ▶


IN 1993 WHITNEY HOUSTON SCORED A HUGE HIT WITH 'I'M EVERY WOMAN', BUT WHO SANG IT ORIGINALLY?
CHAKA KHAN
CHER
DONNA SUMMER
DIANA ROSS
ASH
1250
CLAUDE
1250
DONNA
750
CHEERY
500

The team's production chops have helped make Sony's quiz series Buzz! into a million-selling PS3 franchise

At least, that's the established perspective of such a problem. But to Wish, the dichotomy of capturing new and old in single titles is more of an opportunity.

> ***For us, creating a game is like doing an oil painting. You start with an outline, and you build up lots of layers.***
>
> Caspar Field, Wish Studios

RECLAIMING SOCIAL

"There's been this huge social scene for a while now, and as it's begun to make more money, it's become more saccharine and watered down," says Bennett. "Somewhere along that evolution of what 'social' meant in terms of games, the industry lost sight of making great games that were social. I'm talking titles like *Street Fighter* and *Worms* and all those games that brought people together. Those were what we'd call 'hardcore', but they were still something I'd play with my girlfriend. They were easy to use, but allowed for that showmanship. That's the point we want to find."

It is apparent, then, that Wish has ambitions to make truly social games that contradict all the clichés about Facebook games and mindless gameplay. Field and Bennett talk enthusiastically about how games of the 1990s combined accessibility, depth and the opportunity for showmanship of high-level skills, all without being defined as casual or hardcore or anything else quite so restrictive.

"We see all these options as one platform really," explains Bennet. "People are too quick to put everything into boxes, and actually it's just about great ideas. All these platforms, even if you're talking second screen and smart TV, they're reaching this level of parity. It's quite an exciting time because your ideas can work across most or even all of them."

In that context, it's little surprise that the team are quick to talk of the benefits of the Unity engine, which is famed for both its multiplatform support and the rapid prototyping so vital for an ideas-focused studio. In fact, Wish lists experience with Unity as one of its core strengths, along with 'in the room social'.

PAINTING A PICTURE

Looking forward, Wish plans to expand slowly, staying in the Brighton hub and working with freelancers and contractors.

There's also a clear idea in place of the creative process, which Field, a former games journalist with training in the arts, describes as similar to working with canvas and paints.

"For us, creating a game is like doing an oil painting," says Field. "You start with an outline, and you build up lots of layers. As you lay on the paint, you increase your understanding of the subject and what it is about. You can constantly rework the details and constantly improve the overall with the layers. That's how we build our games. We don't want to list 50 things and do them averagely well; we like to pick just three or four things and build them up to something brilliant, deep and nuanced."

Wish is a team with strong ideas about the method and theory of its games design process. It's games, however, remain a secret, and until they are public it is hard to predict the impact Field, Bennet and Brooke will make. Certainly they have the heritage and experience to make their company thrive, and with a major Sony project underway Wish is explicitly already impressing the right people. ■ **www.wishstudios.co.uk**

START-UP ADVICE? AS YOU WISH

YOU'LL HAVE NO doubt noticed that this issue of *Develop* is devoted largely to start-up developers and Wish Studios, of course, is a fledging start-up.

That considered, CEO Caspar Field is happy to share advice on his experience managing teams of start-ups.

"Something I've found so important to success in the past is maintaining that interaction of different skills within a small team. With everything else going on, people forget that making games has to be a creative endeavor that exists between the different disciplines."

And, he says, you can continue that logic as your company expands and welcomes more staff into the production fold.

"As you grow your team, you have to maintain units of creative teams that cover disciplines. Let's say you end up at 50 people, then maybe you'd want ten units of five people all from different disciplines. That can really stimulate and empower the individuals. Where you see people making errors as they grow is when they organise their teams by discipline, so you have a pool of artists and separate pool of designers, and not much crossover. That's not what you want to do; you have to try and build mini furnaces of creativity."

That, combined with a really strong brief, creative freedom and lots of trust is the secret to structuring your growing start-up, says Field, who has served as executive producer on teams of 70 people, and advocates running numerous small sub-teams over structuring the creative process around a singular entity.

Calling all indies

Windows 8 is finally here, and Microsoft is using all its might to support indie, student and start-up studios embracing the platform. Turn the page to find out how the new OS can make your games development dreams a moneymaking reality

With the long awaited Windows 8 and Windows Phone 8 finally with us, a huge new opportunity for independent developers has dawned.

The arrival of the operating system not only marks the point where Microsoft has become more serious than ever before about working with UK indies; it opens the door to an alternative platform for sharing your games with the world.

And it's a stage free from overcrowded marketplaces, where Microsoft is offering a range of support packages that give even the smallest teams all they need to blossom on Windows 8.

With start-up and student support packages such as BizSpark and DreamSpark offering prospective Windows 8 and Windows Phone 8 developers free access to tools, marketing support and a wealth of other help, it's also easier than ever to embrace developing for a powerful new OS.

To help you understand just what Windows 8 and Windows Phone offers UK indies, over the page there are interviews with start-ups already working on games for the new OS, guides to DreamSpark and BizSpark, insight from university lecturers embracing the programmes, and even contact details for the Microsoft employee that can help make your development dream a reality.

You can make a living out of indie games, and Windows 8 could be your ticket to success.

Windows 8 is here

DEVELOPER INTERVIEW: Fee Stewart, MD and founder, FormerDroid

What kind of games do you make?
FormerDroid is a UK-based team of developers. We make causal and fun games and apps for all ages. Our biggest title so far is the BAFTA nominated *Shplem*. There are seven of us in total, all with a range of different skills, which is why we make such a good team.

What attracted you to BizSpark?
I was attracted to it because of the useful packages of software and helpful group chats and groups of business people you can talk with. It's a great source of materials, but also opens up a global network of potential partners for FormerDroid to work with.

How has BizSpark helped your studio? What impact has it had?
We have only recently started using BizSpark and already it has helped the business to become more time efficient and organised. We're also starting to see the benefit of using Microsoft software packages to produce mobile games.

Has BizSpark had any effect on how you perceive Microsoft?
I've of course always been aware of Microsoft, but I wasn't aware of how much support they offer to emerging businesses such as ours. We're very keen to continue working with them and to capitalise on the relationship we've begun to build.

What would you say to other start-ups considering the BizSpark program as an option?
Other businesses should look at it because as it is useful, insightful and free to use.

PROFILE: DreamSpark

- DreamSpark is a worldwide initiative available in some 149 countries that provides no-cost access to Microsoft design and development tools for verified students and educators, so as to support and advance their learning and skills

- DreamSpark gives you the opportunity to develop the technical skills which are driving the most valued platforms, like social media, cloud computing, enterprise software, and, of course, mobile apps, tools and games

- Over 66 million have downloaded DreamSpark-related software since the program started, and over 8.1 million students actively use software from DreamSpark on a daily basis

- Tools available include Visual Studio Professional 2012, Visual Studio Express 2012 for Windows 8, the Kinect for Windows SDK, Small Basic and XNA Game Studio 4

Get involved!

Finding out more about DreamSpark couldn't be easier. Visit the official website now, and you could kickstart the career you've always dreamed of.

www.dreamspark.com

Why DreamSpark?

Fiona Knight, award leader and senior lecturer at Staffordshire University, has seen DreamSpark change the prospects of her students, and her course. Here she explains why

"For students, it's great as it allows them access to the latest software for their own machines, which for current students is the way they like to work. It also allows them access to the industry-used development environments for games and apps, allowing them to be ahead of the game when they leave university. For the university it means we can teach the latest development environments, knowing that students have access to these outside their class times on their own machines."

PROFILE: BizSpark

- Microsoft BizSpark is a global programme that helps software start-ups succeed by giving them free access to Microsoft development tools

- BizSpark also connects start-ups with key industry players, including investors, and provides marketing visibility to help start-up studios and games industry entrepreneurs

- BizSpark is available to all active developer start-ups that are privately held, have been in business for less than five years, and bring in less than $1 million in annual revenue

- The Microsoft BizSpark program strives to help young and innovative software companies gain valuable experience and expertise in Microsoft technologies, with no upfront costs

Get involved!

If you think BizSpark could be what you need to get your studio making games that get played, then why wait? You can find out all you need at the initiative's official website, and begin the process of applying to have your studio accepted.

www.bizspark.com

The new OS from Microsoft is finally public, and its creators are doing everything in their power to welcome students, start-ups and indies to the platform. Here we detail what Windows 8 and Windows Phone offers new studios, and how the BizSpark and DreamSpark programs can help turn your development dreams into a reality

So, what is Ubelly then?

Turn the page and you'll see the distinct artwork of Ubelly. But just what is the unofficial website about, and why should you give it any of your precious time?

Despite the unusual name and striking artwork, Ubelly is something you'll certainly understand. That's because it's a website. And yet it is so much more than that. It serves as the 'unofficial official' Microsoft blog for developers.

The team behind Ubelly cover the events you want to go to, write about the things you want to read about, and care about the things you care about.

As such, it's the perfect place for independent insight and advice on games design, events, harnessing the power of the web, and building and marketing successful apps. There's also interviews with developers, overviews of the most exciting – and geeky – technological developments on the planet, and guest posts by the industry's brightest minds.

If you're a start-up, student or indie developer considering making games for Microsoft platforms, it's the essential destination for independent-minded information and help.

Most of the regular contributors to the Ubelly.com blog are from members of the Developer & Platform Evangelism Team at Microsoft, based in the UK. The team are a collective of web and online experts with a deep passion for all things digital. You can find each of them individually on Twitter by following **@simonster, @andspo, @bennuk, @thebeebs, @lee_stott, @SaraAllison** and **@mtaulty**.

And, of course, you can read all the news, blogs, interviews and opinion pieces at the official website.

www.ubelly.com/gaming

Here to help

Andrew Webber is Microsoft's UK audience marketing lead for Game App Builders, and he can help you make your game idea a reality

What do you do at Microsoft?
My job is brilliantly varied but is basically to talk to anyone about why they should look to develop a Windows 8 or Windows Phone 8 game app.

So, is Microsoft all about securing apps in their Stores?
Absolutely not. We want to play our part in supporting and encouraging a vibrant UK video games industry. We can do this in a number of different ways – as seen with Dlala Studios recently we love working with indie studios and helping to establish them and their games. Whilst we can't do this for everyone I want to find ways that I can use the marketing activity I do to give visibility to studios, app developers and their games. We also have 'incubation' programmes to help start-ups and students, such as our BizSpark and DreamSpark programmes. *Contact Andrew at* **andrew@microsoft.com**

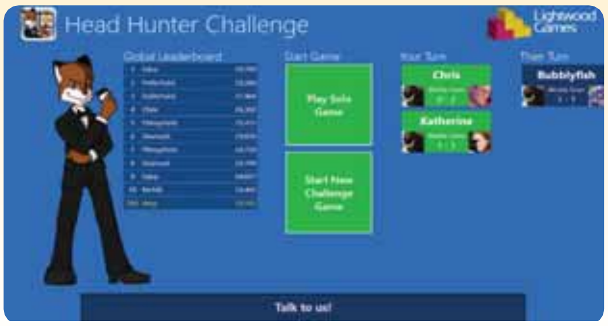
DEVELOPER INTERVIEW: Chris Newman, MD, Lightwood

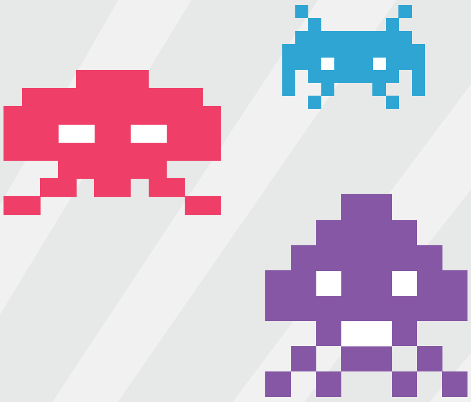
Could you tell us a little bit about your studio?
We've been making games for iPhone and iPad since 2010. Primarily we produce puzzle games and – wherever possible – try to give them new social twists. Lightwood Games is a very small studio – there is just two of us full time.

What about Windows 8 attracted you to the platform?
The prospect of having our apps put right in front of the noses of millions of desktop computers, as well as the next generation of tablet PCs, was just too good to resist. We really get a buzz out of seeing people play our games. The reach of Windows is second to none and I'm delighted that we'll be included in the new Windows Store from day one.

And what are the platform's strengths, now that you've worked with it?
Windows 8 has clearly been created with touch in mind, and it's really great when you use it on a tablet. Coming from a background of touchscreen app development, this really suited us, and we were able to play to our strengths while embracing the content-oriented design principles of Windows. Many people are dubious of the new Windows Store making it a closed platform, but this is actually a really great feature for consumers.

Has Windows 8 had any effect on how you perceive Microsoft?
I had no idea we'd get so much help from Microsoft along the way. It was really refreshing to be treated like we could actually do something great on their platform.





I could've developed a Windows 8 game, but I took an arrow to the knee

Don't get caught out.

Find out about developing or porting your games for the next generation of Windows and Windows Phone at

ubelly.com/gaming

Microsoft

BGS
BRASIL GAME SHOW
XBOX 360.
SEVEN
SAÍDA
EXIT

Booming Brazil

After years struggling with taxation issues, rife piracy and a sporadic infrastructure, the South American country's development sector is establishing itself as a powerful emerging market. **Will Freeman** investigates

Attendees lining up for the Brazil Game Show in São Paulo, which was attended by more than 100,000 visitors in 2012

IF YOU HAVE even a passing interest in the inner workings of the games industry, you'll have no doubt heard of the Latin Amerian nation's new status as a vital emerging market.

The development scene proliferating across the continent is booming, but there is one place in South America leading the charge. That nation is Brazil, and its games makers are eager to show the rest of the world that soon – if not already – they will be equipped to rival the output of the globe's leading development hubs.

The clichés about Brazil certainly paint a kind picture of the region. It is famed for the beauty of its landscape, the cultural diverse make-up of its urban communities and its status as a go-to destination for those who love to party.

Such stereotypes are hardly unpleasant, but the studios and organisations collectively striving to propel the country into the games development spotlight are keen to project a very different image.

Brazil, say its developers, is a land of opportunity, with great rewards for those willing to invest the required effort. The country's internet infrastructure is rapidly establishing itself, and a new generation are finding themselves with both the money and time to invest in games.

> ***"Brazil has, indeed, been doing extremely well lately, mostly due to the massive improvements in the infrastructure."***
>
> Julian Migura, UOL BoaCompra

"I believe that the industry here is pretty young, so there hasn't been enough time for Brazilian studios to develop a particular strength," admits Werther Azevedo, design director at Rio de Janeiro studio Nano Games. "What I can say is that our workforce is known to be versatile across the digital media industry. We tend to be generalists by trade, and I think this is a trait that lends itself well to the games industry. Brazilians are known for providing creative solutions to hard problems."

CONNECTED PEOPLE

Others, however, point out that Brazil is beginning to develop strengths and specialities, largely thanks to the aforementioned dawn of new levels of robust web connectivity.

"Due to the large increase in the areas of internet technology and smartphones, the majority of independent studios are opting to invest in games for those platforms," offers Fernando Pepe Barbalho Pereira of São Paulo's Mayness Studios. "There is also a great demand for advertising games on these platforms, especially for social networks – such as Facebook – and mobiles."

"Brazil has, indeed, been doing extremely well lately, mostly due to the massive improvements in the infrastructure, which brings along a huge growth rate of connected households," adds Julian Migura of games publishing and localisation giant UOL BoaCompra. "But, even with the amazing number of already close to 40 million gamers across the country, only 50 per cent are connected to the internet at this point, which means there's a lot of further growth to be expected in the coming years."

▶

BRAZIL'S TRADE BODIES

BRAZIL'S FLEDGLING interactive entertainment industry currently has two trade bodies fighting the corner for the nation's games businesses.

The Brazilian Association of the Developers of Digital Games focuses on developers' interests, while the Commercial, Industrial and Cultural Association of Games serves a more generic function, which was conceived to increase the awareness of gaming, the industry and the perception of games in general.

The associations are supported by Government, but as suggested by Rafael Hrasko, business director at studio Interama, the authorities in the country have much more to do.

"They only just recently woke up to our industry," he says of the governing powers in Brazil. "I would say five years ago they started noticing us. This is the year where the actual support is beginning. There are a lot of talks, and a few prizes here and there, but nothing substantial."

Crowds of visitors flit around the PlayStation booth at the Brazil Game Show (right)

The emphasis there is on expectation, rather than the numbers waiting for sturdy web connections. Brazil's glass may be half empty in that regard, but the industry is collectively focusing on filling it to the brim.

Social and mobile studios are opening their doors across the region – and in neighbouring Latin American countries – at an astounding rate, and unanimously there is interest in building connected gaming experiences.

But why now? Brazil's larger cities have enjoyed many years connected to the world through the internet, and as a creative nation the country's populace are well regarded.

A TAXING ISSUE

The fact is, for a long time Brazil's games makers have had it tough, and only now are core problems being overcome. One problem comes up again and again is tax, and this is a huge challenge for the technology industries in the country, as Pereira explains.

"Unfortunately in Brazil we have an excessive amount of taxes, especially for games and related services. Besides taxes, investors are not so confident to invest in a market that was stagnant during prior periods and also the unstable economy."

Developments in the international market, in relation to the stabilisation of the Brazilian economy, have helped to improve the things, but pressure remains on the Government to recognise the industry's potential.

"We still face high taxation from the government," says Azevedo. "Labour laws in Brazil are pretty heavy for the entrepreneur. Whenever we hire new personnel, we must pay their salary, plus 100 per cent in tax. This makes our costs higher than countries such as Canada, US or Australia."

He reveals that there is some talk of incentives from the Government, but points to a painfully slow system and "a grave corruption problem" that is serving to dash the hopes of those looking for help from the country's authorities.

> ***"Labour laws in Brazil are pretty heavy. Whenever we hire new personnel, we must pay their salary, plus 100 per cent in tax."***
>
> Werther Azevedo, Nano Games

And there's been another problem for Brazilian developers, and one too many from elsewhere can empathise with.

"In the past we had piracy as a big problem, and also products that were brought to Brazil in an illegal way," states Brazil Games Show director Marcelo Tavares, who quickly moves the conversation to more positive matters. "Nowadays, piracy is decreasing and the companies are starting news offices and factories in Brazil. On the other side, the economy in all sectors is growing and international events like the World Cup Finals and the Olympic Games are a great example of the growth here."

MOVING FORWARD

By all accounts Tavares is right to be positive, for while it's easy to dwell on the troubled past of Brazil's games industry, looking forward things look very good indeed.

"Brazil today is what Turkey was like maybe two or three years ago," offers Pascal Zuta, CEO of the European wing of games portal host Aeria Games, which counts a Brazilian office as its most recent new operation. "There was a rush to serve Turkey when that market was exploding, and now that is happening in Brazil, but on a larger scale."

Part of the reason for the move to embrace Brazil's blossoming games industry stems from a reason it's hard to be sceptical about, for the country has seized the opportunity provided by affordable development tools. Games creation might not yet be the preserve of the layman, but affordable, accessible development software has swept in to save the South American nation from its woes about taxes and piracy.

"I believe games are just easier to make now," insists Rafael Hrasko, business director at Vitória-based studio Interama. "When technology is not a problem anymore, there's only lack of creativity holding you back. And creativity is something Brazilians have a bountiful amount of.

"Plus, there's digital distribution, making it easier to survive without a big publisher to release your game in the market. Now all you have to do is have a link and an impressive marketing campaign."

Some might accuse Hrasko of naivety, but what he is demonstrating is a spirit that ▶

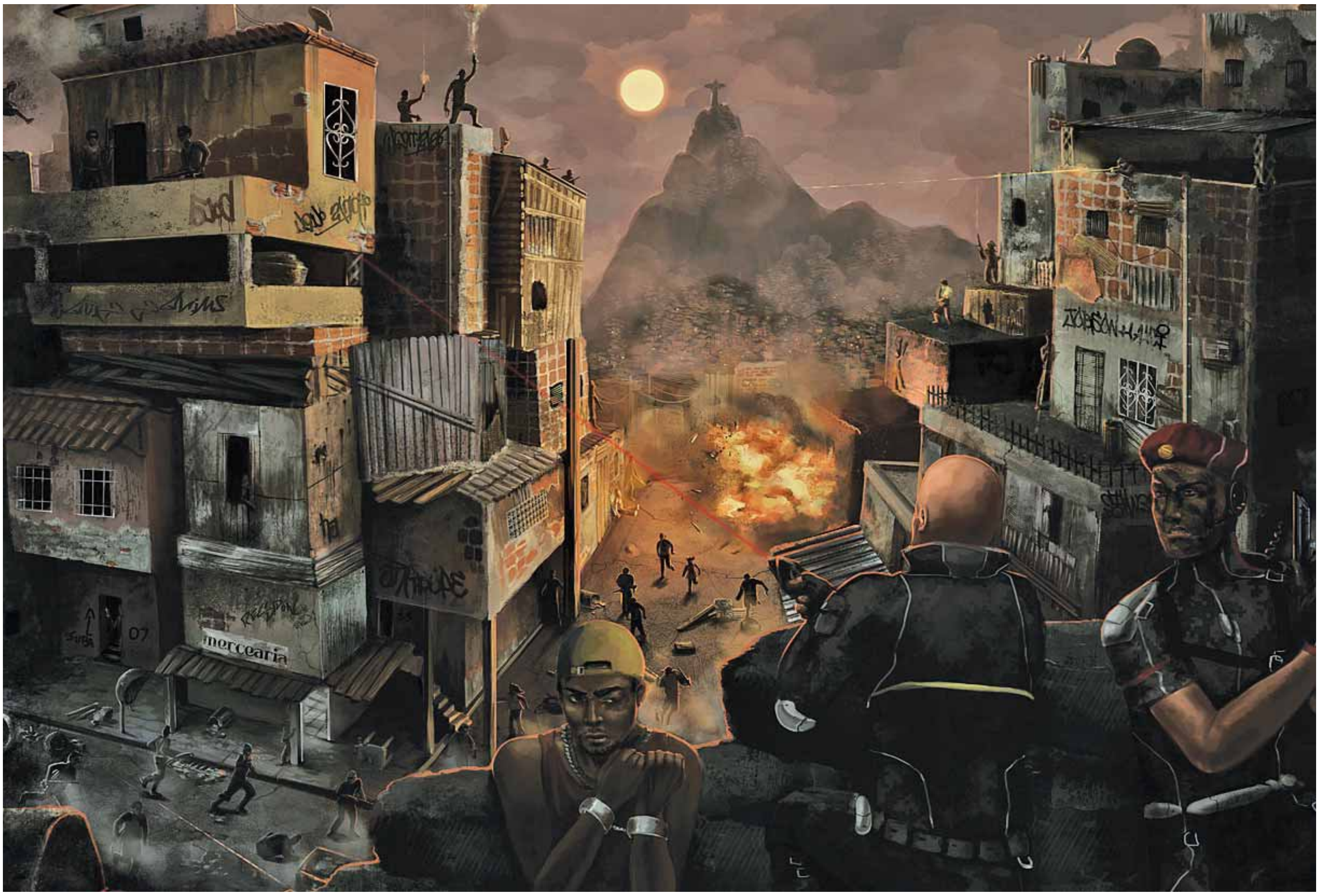
ec

SCALE GLOBALLY INSTANTLY.

An excellent and memorable online gaming experience requires a lightning-fast round trip back to the gaming server. This is impossible with traditional web hosts, and building your own global network is beyond the scope of all but the largest companies.

EdgeCast can give you the truly global presence you need, while helping you meet the demand of millions of users without skipping a beat.

edgecast.com/gaming



Mobile and browser game, Favela Wars, is an over-the-top depiction of urban life in Brazil (above), meanwhile Blooming Daisies (opposite) is a game about urban parks management by Interama

permeates all of Brazil's development scene. With so many bigger problems apparently on the wane, issues like online publishing and discoverability seem like lesser concerns, and Brazil is ready to tackle them.

Hrasko and others also state that those developers that left Brazil for the infamous brain drains, like Canada, are now returning home, tempted by the new found positivity and wealth of opportunities.

But it isn't just homegrown talent moved far from home that is eyeing Brazil's industry. Electronics and development giants like SCEA are also moving in on Brazil.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

"From SCEA's perspective, what we are excited about is the fact that we can now ship development equipment into most of the countries from Mexico all the way to Chile," says Bruno Matzdorf, resource development program manager at SCEA's Developer Services and Support Group, which sees opportunity across Latin America, and launched its PlayStation 3 in the region two years ago. "This means that more developers will now have the opportunity to show the world what they can do on the PlayStation consoles. The ability to ship development hardware has been quite a challenge, but we knew we had to do this in order to adequately seed developers, and allow for them to reach their console potential."

With the biggest the games companies in the world mobilising their development hardware for Brazil's benefit, it is clear something special is taking place there.

Elsewhere, it is free-to-play that seems to cause the most excitement among the Brazilian developers striving to make a global impact with their games.

> ***"We can now ship development equipment into most of the countries from Mexico all the way to Chile."***
>
> Bruno Matzdorf, SCEA

"I think the free-to-play model is tailor-made for Brazilian audiences," says Azevedo. "Piracy has always been a problem in Brazil, not only in games, but in the music and movie industries as well. Brazilians like to play for free, and they are culturally inclined to get digital goods for free. So I think that a model like free-to-play, where there's no barrier to try the game and get hooked to it, is a good match for the Brazilian audience."

WORKING IT OUT

For its games industry to thrive, Brazil, like anywhere, needs a workforce that is both numerous and skilled, and that remains a constant challenge.

But its problem in this regard is an atypical one. The talent is there, and in abundant volumes, but the industry's relatively small size in terms of available jobs means it is not always easy to attract staff.

"Our local institutions provide good graduates in the art and design area, but not so much in the development area," says Azevedo of Nano Games, which has produced mobile games based on TV series by Nickelodeon and MTV, and later adds: "Our industry is [somewhat] small to meet the hundreds of graduates interested in games every year, so I'd say overseas recruiters will likely find passionate, hardworking people, eager to work in their games industry."

And so it is that many locally trained prospective games makers find themselves employed overseas, or, as UOL BoaCompra's Migura points out, in Brazil's other flourishing technology industries.

BRAZIL'S BIG NUMBERS

- 35 million
  Active gamers in Brazil
- 47 per cent
  The volume of Brazil's game playing public that spend money and time gaming online
- £1.25 billion
  The country's games industry revenue
- 64 million
  The number of hours Brazilians play games per day

"It's very hard to find qualified staff in Brazil, especially for web games, as you're competing with media and internet companies that are usually able to pay higher wages and are 'battling' for the staff," he says. "Many people started to outsource development work to Argentina, Chile, Mexico, Portugal, Spain or the US, or are thinking about doing so."

Others, however, believe that Brazil's local talent pool is actually a little lacking in terms of the games industry's needs, and according to Mayness Studios' Pereira, educational institutes in the nation could do more.

"It is not easy to find qualified workers in Brazil for this specific market." He says. "Unfortunately the amount of developers is growing at a slower level when compared to the internal market."

"Education is a problem in every sector, mostly because talented people are usually working for the government or in the industry already, not teaching," says Interama's Hrasko in agreement. "Of course, there are some great schools with outstanding professors here, but they are exception, not the rule."

GRAND PLANS

But there is a sense that the market can continue to grow, which will in turn see issues around staffing fall by the wayside as the industry becomes more attractive, resulting in games that are more intricate, globally significant and, ultimately, profitable.

"It is hard to make money in Brazil, and it took us a long time, so you need to put a lot of effort in," suggests Aeria's Zuta. "There are many obstacles for publishers there, due to the tax difficulties, the young infrastructure, and the complexity of the payment models there. That's the case with much of Latin America, but if you can overcome these obstacles, the rewards in the region are huge, and there are communities ready to be grown, as the competition isn't as strong in Brazil as it is elsewhere."

> ***It's very hard to find qualified staff in Brazil, especially for web games, as you're competing with media companies.***
>
> Werther Azevedo, Nano Games

Azevedo, puts the nation's challenges into prespective, reminding us that, while Brazil hosts some of the best socialising in the world, there's a hard working attitude that should see the emerging games business prosper.

"Although Brazil may be viewed internationally as a place where everyone likes to party all the time, we are very hardworking people," he states. "Our company has been fighting to stay alive against all adversities for more than five years, and we are still running strong, as are other Brazilian companies."

If he is to be believed, expect to hear a lot more about Brazil's development scene from us in the coming years. ■

PEOPLE POWER

BRAZIL'S GAMES INDUSTRY is starting to do very well, and that's in part due to a rise in the financial freedom of a large chunk of the populace.

But according to developer Interama's business director Rafael Hrasko, that cultural shift is a single part of a three-pronged change in the country in recent years.

"First there's the ascension of the Brazilian middle class," he explains. "In the past few years there have been better income distributions to the lower classes, allowing more people to buy stuff, including goods like smartphones and video game consoles.

"Secondly, the nation's communications infrastructure has improved, allowing millions of people to access broadband and 3G technology for a relatively low cost.

"Finally, games are now cheaper. Not everyone is willing to pay $60 for a game, but $1 is very a accessible price point."

And, says Hrasko and many of his contemporaries, the perception of gaming culture has changed. The hobby has – as happened in Europe and the US years previously – lost its nerdy associations. As a result, games development as a career now garners a new level of respect and status, and a new generation is now keen to pursue work in the industry.

The home of Recruitment for Video Games & Film MPG Universal

Covering Creative, Commercial, Production & Technical positions for Studios across the Globe Specialising in Executive Appointments.

MPG is currently working with some of the best names in the industry on Exclusive Opportunities around the World. To find out more check out the website or call us for a discussion about your needs today!

Top positions - Studio Head, General Manager, CTO, Design Director Business Intelligence Director, VP & PR Director to name but a few. To find out more contact us today on 0844 800 9995 or Int'l +44 1473 833 555.

Let us help you Stand Out From The Crowd !

www.mpg-universal.com

© MPG Universal Ltd 2012

Artwork © Seung-Jun Lee

BUILD

THE LATEST TOOLS NEWS, TECH UPDATES & TUTORIALS

Unity's new Wii U deal p58

Character building

We take an in-depth look at the cutting-edge of animation, where tools companies, studios and service providers are pushing in-game characters to new limits, p48

Crisp Thinking's Player Watch p53

Scoring Fable: The Journey p59

Putting the character in animation

As the current generation of consoles subside and the industry moves on to a new era, **Craig Chapple** discovers what is in store for the future of character animation, and how it can overcome the uncanny valley

Top-to-bottom: Robert Lanciault of Unity 3D and Colin Urquhart of Dimensional Imaging, which specialises in performance capure, as seen in the main image

CHARACTER ANIMATION HAS come on leaps and bounds during the current generation of consoles. Games such as *L.A. Noire* and *Heavy Rain* have shown developers and users the near-realism that can be achieved using advanced and impressive facial capture and animation techniques.

But despite making an impressive jump, advancements in this sector have slowed as we approach the seventh year of the longest console cycle in history, with developers tasked with getting the most out of hardware released in 2005.

Technology and memory has advanced greatly since the PS3 and Xbox 360 were launched, and although they are still impressive powerhouses, top range PCs easily outstretch these aging systems. And whilst mobile and tablets have scaled up their capabilities at an impressive pace to offer console quality in terms of graphical fidelity, they are still now only matching limited console quality, not yet surpassing it.

A NEW ERA

But with the next generation of consoles seemingly close to hitting us – with Nintendo's own contender the Wii U to launch at the end November – a new wave of technology is set to hit the games industry, with current technology set to receive a much needed boost to take character animation to the next level.

Epic is gearing up for the release of Unreal Engine 4, with its own title *Fortnite* harnessing the powerful development platform, and Square Enix has also signed a deal to utilise its features.

NaturalMotion is readying the release of Morpheme 4.0 in the near future, which is set to include a toolkit for building prediction models of an animation network, allowing a game at runtime to ask questions of its animation system.

> ***"One of the key trends we're seeing at the moment is a desire for characters to appear more intelligent in games."***
>
> Simon Mack, NaturalMotion

Meanwhile, Unity is readying the release of Unity 4, which Unity animation technical director Robert Lanciault says will let developers create "out-of-the-box" interactive animations within minutes, as well as visual tools, live links and preview windows to give as smooth a user experience as possible through every step of the animation process (see Defining animation with Mecanim).

One of the current trends directing the new breed of character animation technology, says The Creative Assembly's motion capture manager Peter Clapperton, is pre-visualisation. The man heading up the *Total War* developer's brand new motion capture studio in Horsham – the largest developer-owned mo-cap centre in Europe – believes pre-visualisation is the way forward for the space, with an marked increased in demand for quantity and quality of animations from users.

"We felt there was a need to expand the mo-cap studio and services we provide in order to reduce clean-up time and provide us with the potential to pre-viz work through the real-time streaming process," he says, of the motion capture studio which opened in August this year.

"Having a permanent facility is already proving to be extremely effective for prototyping a lot of work before hiring fight performers to come in so we can be more efficient and effective on the days of final capture."

Another driving force in character animation technology is that of the relationship between AI systems with physics and animation. NaturalMotion CTO Simon Mack says there is a clamour for characters to appear smarter, requiring smoother and more realistic animations when obstructed by other NPCs and obstacles.

An armour-clad warrior from Epic's Unreal Engine 4 tech demo

LIGHTING THE FUSE

MIXAMO IS CURRENTLY in the process of developing a new "game-changing" free character modeling service named Fuse.

The tech, developed in collaboration with Stanford University and currently set for release in January 2013, is designed to offer developers and artists a new way to model 3D characters.

The tool itself will be free, with users paying for the particular models and assets they need.

While Mixamo is still currently considering exactly what features will be available, users will be able to create custom characters by assembling and seamlessly stitching together body parts.

The tool will also enable a direct integration with Mixamo Auto-Rigger and animation services, with further content packs to be released in future, essentially bringing the free-to-play model to games technology.

"This is a product that is going to complete the Mixamo offerings for character animation and it will go from character creation to texturing to rigging and all the way to animating the character, we are really excited," says Mixamo CEO Stefano Corazza.

"We're only in beta on the product, but the response has been really good and now we're plugging in more materials in time for launch."

"One of the key trends we're seeing at the moment is a desire for characters to appear more intelligent in games, from the way that key characters interact with the environment to the motion seen in crowds," says Mack.

"As well as needing to create great animation networks, there's a requirement to be able to more easily control these from AI systems. A few years ago there was a lot of talk about the interactions between animation, AI and physics. Physics integration has largely been solved, or at least understood, and it seems that now, studios are really calling out for the AI-animation interaction to be addressed."

COUNTING THE COSTS?

Havok behaviour and animation lead Jason Gorski and Epic Games lead animator Jay Hosfelt meanwhile state that iteration speed and the driving down of costs is another important aspect of the new era of character animation tech.

Hosfelt states that offering tools and methods for animators to iterate their work quickly is key, with the need to re-watch an animation multiple times to create the perfect look, making a speedier process vital.

"For gameplay animation, it's very important to give animators the ability to tinker with blends and transitions in games and do it with a greater focus on iteration speed," says Hosfelt.

"Animation involves watching something over and over until it looks and feels right. If you give the animator the ability to perfect these things and to iterate quickly, the quality of your games will only improve.

"There are numerous rendering solutions that will also showcase animation. Better skin shaders, lighting, and deformation options will enable game animation rigs to look more like their film counterparts."

> ***"For gameplay animation, it's very important to give animators the ability to tinker with blends and transitions."***
>
> Jay Hosfelt, Epic Games

Gorski adds many studios are pushing more motion capture technology in an effort to reduce iteration costs, and looking for ways to automate the use of data to get up and running quickly, while others are taking on a more procedural animation approach.

It is this drive to reduce expenses, and with the likes of Unity and Mixamo driving sales costs down and targeting indie developers as well as big triple-A powerhouses that is democratising the character animation space.

Earlier this year Mixamo opened an animation store on Autodesk's 3ds Max 2013 and Unity's Asset Store. This month, the firm also made its library of hundreds of characters and thousands of animations available for an annual fee of $500, allowing developers unlimited access to all of its assets, while also not having to leave their favoured toolset and go to a separate site.

CHARACTER ANIMATION FOR EVERYONE?

Mixamo is also developing a brand new modelling tool named Fuse in collaboration with Stanford University, which, although still currently at an experimental stage, it is planning on releasing in January. The tool is designed help alleviate the problem of high-costs versus high quality in 3D character modelling. It will be free to use for developers, with users only paying for the assets they want (See Lighting the Fuse).

It is efforts such as this, as well as the rise in power of relatively easy access platforms, such as iOS and Android, means that developers of all levels are able to harness previously expensive tools and animations for a fraction of the price – with the extra effect of increasing the quality of smaller titles in graphical terms.

"The overall plan is through technology enabling more people to create content," explains Mixamo CEO Stefano Corazza. "Instead of requiring specific technical

▶

Top-to-bottom: Jay Hosfelt of Epic Games and Jason Gorski of Havok

Top-to-bottom: Peter Clapperton of The Creative Assembly, Simon Mark of NaturalMotion and Stefano Corazza of Mixamo

skills and five years training in Maya or Max, these new tools and services allow anybody, even coders, to create beautiful characters and animations, and bring them to life in their game.

"We are massively broadening the potential userbase because there's one level of obstruction that we created where people can use very high-level controls to create content without knowing even what a polygon is.

"So that's the big shift, allowing the democratisation of character creation and animation where anybody will be able to create the content they like without needing any technical knowledge about it."

OUT OF REACH

NaturalMotion's Mack says however that whilst tools such as its own animation tech Morpheme is pushing forward democratisation in the sector, full state-of-the-art character animation is still out of reach for smaller studios in terms of making their own tools to use, but praises the wealth of options available from third-parties.

"Full featured character animation systems are large and complex things," explains Mack. "I don't see smaller studios building them from the ground up. Fortunately, there are various mature middleware solutions available, including Morpheme, that are as accessible to smaller teams as they are to the big studios.

"Used properly, middleware engines give these teams a platform they can use to build their own innovative technology on without having to invest dozens of man-years in tools development. We certainly see smaller teams using and extending Morpheme in more inventive ways than many established studios today."

Colin Urquhart, CEO of Scotland-based human body 3D and 4D surface image capture outfit Dimensional Imaging, which has done work on games, such as *FIFA 13*, says that it is the large and spiralling costs of facial animation, particularly when creating your own solutions, that is one of the challenges facing the space.

He agrees with Mack that third-party middleware solutions and animations are perhaps the most cost-effective way of delivering quality character animation, particularly in the area of facial capture, but also stresses that with the rise in realism, the quality of acting must also rise.

"One of the key challenges that the industry is facing is the spiralling cost of continually improving the quality of facial animation," says Urquhart. "How can studios create hours of facial animation at ever higher levels of detail, quality and realism within reasonable budgets?

"I think the answer has to be to use technology like Dimensional Imaging's to accurately capture the performance from real life talent. However, this then introduces the challenge that as the realism and fidelity of the animation improves, so the quality of the performance must also improve to match. Therefore, I see the secondary challenge of obtaining good acting performances becoming increasingly important to the industry."

Havok's Gorski says another challenge facing the industry is combining automated processes with traditional animation. He says bringing these two aspects and techniques together could mean more personality and a sense of realism – even when given a certain amount of artistic flair to the game's style – helping to draw in players clamouring for my personality in game characters.

> ***"It's surprisingly common to see beautifully modelled and rendered characters sliding across the ground and up stairs."***
>
> Simon Mack, NaturalMotion

"I think there will continue to be a tension between more automated processes – procedural animations, cloth simulation, IK solutions – and traditional animation as players seek more dynamic characters, but also desire strong artistic flare," he says.

"Studios will need to find ways to leverage and combine both effectively to create really great characters. That's where Havok Behavior's modular design can really help out. Studios can customise the tech to suit their particular artistic vision, incorporating in-house tech when desired, while leveraging a powerful suite of out-of-the-box features."

BREAKING REALISM

Perhaps one of the greatest challenges that has faced character animation however is that of the uncanny valley, where facial animations that come close to conveying realistic human likeness, but still look slightly off, subsequently causing an uneasy feeling in the user. Whilst the likes of *L.A. Noire* came close, games still struggle to convincingly break out of the uncanny valley.

Urquhart says that the issue is still as real now as it was in previous years, and with the rise in consumer expectations of graphical fidelity, particularly with the imminent arrival of next-gen consoles, the danger still exists of characters falling into the uncanny valley without realistic animations applied to them.

"I think that the uncanny valley is as meaningful in 2012 as it ever has been," he says. "In fact, as characters become ever more realistic, there is more of a danger of them dropping into the valley if insufficiently realistic animation is applied to them. This is one of the reasons why there is currently such a strong focus on achieving more realistic facial animation."

A facial animation render created with Dimensional Imaging's technology

DEFINING ANIMATION WITH MECANIM

UNITY'S NEW HIGH-END character animation system Mecanim was announced in June this year during the unveiling of Unity 4. The tech promises to deliver fluid and natural motion with a highly efficient interface, and Unity animation technical director Robert Lanciault says it offers a deep integration with the game engine to create out-of-the-box interactive animations within minutes.

The tech also includes advanced run-time features, such as mutlilayer state machine or multiple IK pass solving, which are designed to help developers elegantly solve the most complex uses.

Lanciault claims Mecanim is set to help define the direction of character animation for the future, and bigs up Unity as converging all the latest tech into one multifunctional solution.

"There are a lot of wonderful things happening in animation technology and Unity is the convergence of all that wonder in a single product," he says.

"Mo-cap currently is a bunch of animated markers that big studios crunch out endlessly. In Unity, motion captured animations are assets you can browse and buy on our Asset Store and instantly preview on your favourite character thanks to our retargeting system. Now any development studio of any size can take advantage of advanced animation technologies to make characters move with exceptional fluidity."

Mack however believes that while there are a few examples of characters looking so realistic that their slight flaws were easily noticeable among players, the more concerning issue with achieving realism stems from unrealistic movements of character models across a game's landscape and obstacles.

> **“It's still very expensive for games to overcome the uncanny valley, but I predict there will be better capture techniques.”**
>
> Jay Hosfelt, Epic Games

He goes on to explain that the gap between realistic appearance against motion has risen considerably, with characters often seemingly sliding across the when walking on flat surfaces and obstacles such as stairs, rather than conveying realistic movements.

"It's surprisingly common to see beautifully modelled and rendered characters sliding across the ground and up stairs, walking and turning on the spot, failing to react to collisions with their environment and so on," he states. "There's a huge gulf between the realism of character appearance and the credibility of their motion in most games. I find it interesting to watch somebody else playing a game and compare the performance of the characters on screen with those in an animated movie."

Epic's Hosfelt offers potential solutions for developers looking to avoid the traps and pitfalls of the uncanny valley, and advises there a couple of methods that can be successfully deployed to avoid its traps, highlighting the potential of uniquely stylised characters or animating on top of motion captured performances.

"There are two big ways to avoid the uncanny valley," he explains. "One way is to have stylised characters and animation, where you're caricaturising reality. The second way, which pertains mostly to performance capture, is having animators go through and push it beyond what was originally captured.

"Even if you have the best capturing technology, you still need animators putting the final human touches on a captured performance. Facial capture will reproduce a smile, but it still takes an animator to make it a sarcastic smile or a bashful smile.

"It's still very expensive to overcome the uncanny valley for video games, but I predict that one day that there will be better capture techniques, along with a faster way for animators to layer on top of a captured performance and put the final human touches on it."

NEXT GENERATION ANIMATION

It's clear, then, that character animation still has its own hurdles to overcome before the uncanny valley can become a distant memory in our minds, but with the new wave of next-gen consoles, as well as fresh technology from the likes of Unity, NaturalMotion, Mixamo and Epic upon us, that future may not be too far away.

The new era of technology is also providing unheard of democratisation to the sector, meaning small studios and indie developers are also fast catching up with the ability to display realistic animations, although the truly real may still be out of their grasp economically.

As Hosfelt sums up: "As games use more complex state machines, more sophisticated animation trees and better AI, we will more readily believe that our characters are real, with real physics behind them. We'll start seeing more procedural solutions like what we're seeing with Euphoria and ultimately animators will have better tools to make all of this happen." ■

CRYTEK
WARFACE
GEAR
OUTFIT
MISC.

WHAT DO YOU BRING TO THE TABLE?

At Crytek, we play to the strengths of every individual on our team to bring our diverse range of products to life. So if you've got something unique to contribute, we'd love to hear from you!

crytek.com/career

© 2012 Crytek GmbH. Crytek, Crysis, Warface, Fibble and GFace are registered trademarks or trademarks of Crytek GmbH in the USA, Germany and/or other countries. All rights reserved. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

KEY RELEASE

Will Freeman looks at a new tool for monitoring player behaviour

WHAT IS IT?
A new software as a service tool for monitoring player behaviour in online games
COMPANY: Crisp Thinking
www.crispthinking.com

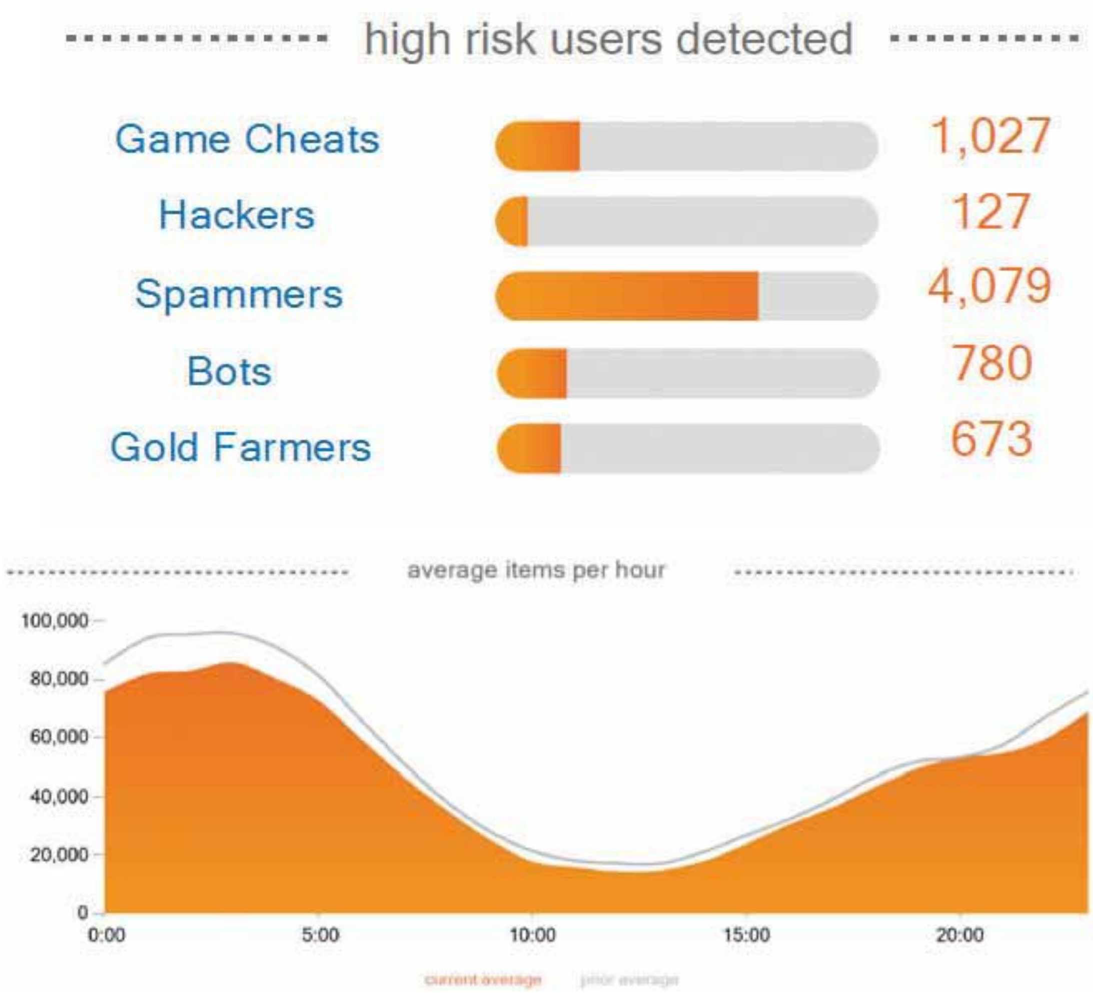
FOUNDED BY CEO Adam Hildreth in 2005, Crisp Thinking made its name developing technology for analysing and moderating online communities, particularly in the realm of children's games and websites.

Since then, the company has worked supporting numerous online games, targeting illegal and predatory behaviour, monitoring user-generated content, and policing the likes of spamming, gold farming and the myriad of other unscrupulous activities undertaken by those consumers most games developers would rather do without.

And now Crisp Thinking has released a piece of software as a service specifically designed for modern online games. Named Player Watch, the technology has been built to accurately detect threats to developers' games, economies and users.

Player Watch takes game data and passes it through a range of 'intelligent classification algorithms', so as to automatically analyse in-game actions.

And, if the developer wants, the system can automatically ban and suspend players, demand credentials from users and escalate cases to a studio or publisher's customer service and moderation teams.



HACKING OFF HACKERS

"What our technology does is essentially look at player behaviour, so it can take into account everything that's going on," explains Hildreth, who met with modest fame when he founded Dubit in 1999 aged just 14. "From the contents of MMO chat streams all the way through to things like how individual player's actions and things that might indicate some kind of cheating or hacking, it can pick up any kind of negative behaviour within a game's world."

And, says Hildreth, Player Watch serves not just to protect developers, but the consumers that are so important in promoting and protecting a game's reputation.

"Player Watch is a two way thing really," he says. "Ultimately, yes, our data can help protect the business models of games developers, by protecting an in-game economy by counting things like gold farming and gold spamming.

"But it also protects the players and maintains the quality of their game experience. The last thing any consumer wants is to put a lot of effort into an online game only to find out the people they were competing with were cheating."

While Player Watch's data analysis is automated, the platform is also highly customisable, say its creators. The process at the point of detection in particular is flexible, and can be handled by staff contact or entirely without human involvement.

In fact, Player Watch offers perhaps more flexibility than any other Crisp offering in this regard, giving studios a wealth of choices with regard to how they monitor their games.

> ***"Our data can help protect the business models of developers, but it also protects players and maintains the quality of their game."***
> Adam Hildreth, Crisp Thinking

But what size studios is Player Watch conceived to serve? According to Hildreth, that's a question with an answer that changes almost by the day.

"It's currently something for studios of a mid-size and above," he offers. "That's purely because we haven't managed to get our price point down to the level suitable for those smaller studios. The more that we allow people to customise the tool themselves, and the more we can open up the self-service model where people do much of the process themselves, the more that price point will come down."

And, say Hildreth, as the company – which has servers across the globe managing seven billion player interactions a month – increases its ability to handle a level of data sometimes similar to Twitter, it may again be in a position to drop its prices.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

With over 100 clients already on its books, Crisp is doing something right. But what of the matter of games studios building internal solutions for monitoring player behaviour? That is surely a viable option for many developers.

"The fact is you can't really predict the problems you're going to face in this area until the game is published; it could be gold farmers or hackers or cheats, and it's very hard to predict," states Hildreth. "The fact is our platform is ready for any of those eventualities, and many more, so there's a flexibility. Player Watch can fit any problem as it arises, on the fly so to speak. You wouldn't, as a developer, want to spend a fortune developing a certain solution for one problem – say goldfarming – and then realise you actually need to address something different like spamming. Player Watch is designed for the whole industry, so already has everything covered. What it offers you will fit to the problems that arise." ■

Crisp Thinking's Player Watch can analyse numerous problems (main image), says founder Adam Hildreth (above)

SOURCEBOO

CREATIVE & PROMOTIONAL SERVICES

Lick Creative
Tel: 0208 498 4000
www.lickcreative.com

an.x
Tel: 01722 420820
www.anxagency.com

Atomhawk Design
Tel: 0191 490 9160
www.atomhawk.com

Bastion
Tel: +44 (0)20 7269 7900
www.bastion.co.uk

Buzz
Tel: +61 3 8412 9000
www.buzzproducts.com

Studio Diva
Tel: 0117 214 0404
www.studiodiva.co.uk

Fink Creative
Tel: 01480 302350
www.finkcreative.com

Fluid
Tel: +44 (0)121 212 0121
www.fluidesign.co.uk

Frontroom
Tel: +44 (0)20 7729 3033
www.frontroom.com

Gem Creative
Tel: 01279 822 800
www.gem.co.uk/gemcreative

Indigo Pearl
Tel: +44 (0)20 8964 4545
www.indigopearl.com

Jellymedia
Tel: 01253 885581
www.jellymedia.com

Mi5 Communications
Tel: +46.708.257.876
www.mi5communications.com

OM
Tel: +44 20 7713 9000
www.omuk.com

Peppermint P
Tel: 0207 240 2645
www.peppermintp.com

Premier
Tel: +44 (0)207 292 8330
www.premiercomms.com

RealtimeUK
Tel: +44 (0)1772 682363
www.realtimeuk.com

Side and Sidelines
Tel: +44 (0)207 631 4800
www.side.coM
www.sidelinesagency.com

SJS LONDON
Tel: +44 20 7421 9400
www.sjslondon.com

Splatter Group
Tel: 01902 544154
www.splattergroup.co.uk

studio CO2
Tel: +44 (0)1483 414 415
www.studioco2.com

The Audio Guys
Tel: +44 (0) 1934 710024
www.theaudioguys.co.uk

Über
Tel: +44 (0)114 278 7100
www.uberagency.com

Wave Recording Studios
Tel: 020 7439 8080
www.wavestudios.co.uk

DIGITAL DISTRIBUTION

Atomblock
Tel: +31[0]24 6452544
www.atomblock.com

GAMING ACCESSORIES

Lygo International
Tel: 0191 230 6650
www.lygoworld.com

Performance Designed Products
Tel: +44 (0)1753 272120
www.pdp.com

Thrustmaster
Tel: 01932 577546
www.thrustmaster.com

INTERNATIONAL DISTRIBUTION

Click Entertainment
Tel: +44 (0)203 137 3781
www.click-entertainment.com

Curveball Leisure
Tel: +44 (0)1792 652521
www.curveball-leisure.com

Digicom Solutions
Tel: +44 (0)845 6344 256
www.digicomsolutions.biz

GameWorld
Tel: +31(0)10-2983838
www.gameworld.nl

Ideal Software
Tel: 01767 689720
www.idealsoftware.net

Koch Media
Tel: +31 182 601228
www.kochmedia.com
www.deepsilver.com

Link Distribution (UK)
Tel: +44 (0)1274 684 668
www.linkdistribution-uk.com

QVS (QV Software)
Tel: +61 2 9748 2555
www.qvsoftware.com.au

Ster Kinekor Entertainment
Tel: +27 11 445 7700
www.primedia.co.za

Vogue Distribution
Tel: +44 (0)1480 409256
www.voguedistribution.com

LEGAL SERVICES

Charles Russell LLP
Tel: +44 (0)20 7203 5000
www.charlesrussell.co.uk

Harbottle & Lewis LLP
Tel: +44 (0)20 7667 5000
www.harbottle.com

LOCALISATION, QA AND TESTING

Babel
Tel: 01273 764100
www.babelmedia.com

GlobalStep LLC
Tel: +44 (0)207 203 2000
www.globalstep.com

Testronic Labs
Tel: +44 (0) 2070 421 700
www.testroniclabs.com

Triple A Testing
Tel: +34 952 028 080
www.tripleAtesting.com

Universally Speaking
Tel: +44 (0) 1480 210621
www.usspeaking.com

VMC Game Labs
Tel: +44 (0) 1753 849 700
www.vmcgamelabs.com

MANUFACTURING SERVICES

OK Media
Tel: +44 (0)20 7688 6789
www.okmedia.biz

Sony DADC Austria AG
Tel: +43 (0)6246 880-0
www.sonydadc.com

MONETISATION AND PAYMENT

Adcash
Tel: +372 687 3002
http://www.adcash.com/

To list your company here and online every week

arvato Entertainment Europe Sonopress GmbH
Tel: +49 (0) 5241 80 5690
www.fidelispay.net
www.arvato-entertainment.de

InComm Europe
Tel: 01489 556700
www.incomm-europe.com

RECRUITMENT

Aardvark Swift
Tel: 01709 834777
www.aswift.com

Amiqus
Tel: 01925 839700
www.amiqus.com

Avatar Games Recruitment
Tel: +44 (0) 1695 682 118 (UK)
1-855-AVATAR-2 (US)
www.avatar-games.co.uk

MPG Universal
Tel: 0844 800 9995
www.mpg-universal.com

OPM Response
Tel: +44 (0)1206 214421
www.opmjobs.com

Specialmove Consultancy
Tel: +44 (0)141 530 4555
www.specialmove.com

Wayforward Recruitment
Tel: London 020 7734 4664
Bristol 0117 966 6038
www.way-forward.com

REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

gamecity:Hamburg
Tel: +49 40 22 70 19 - 41
www.gamecity-hamburg.com

SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT

Artery Studios
Tel: (+36) 20 5868 006
www.artery-studios.com

UK DISTRIBUTION AND LOGISTICS

Centresoft
Tel: 0121 625 3399
www.centresoft.co.uk

Koch Media
Tel: 01256 385 200
www.kochmedia.co.uk
www.kochmedia.com

Realtime Distribution
Tel: 01480 435881
www.realtimeonline.co.uk

WEB SERVICES, CLOUD AND INFRASTRUCTURE

LeaseWeb
Tel:+31 20 316 2880
www.leaseweb.com

MI5 COMMUNICATIONS

Tel: +46.708.257.876
Email: hello@mi5communications.com
Website: www.mi5communications.com

Mi5 Communications offers local expertise and everything from no-nonsense product and corporate public relations via advertising and production to marketing campaigns, media training and events... and anything in-between. Simply put we're your own little Nordic team

NORTHBOUND?
mi5
COMMUNICATIONS
(Relax, we're better at PR than design)

Find out more about this company and many more

ONLINE NOW

www.intentmedia.co.uk/sourcebook/

please contact Jennie.Lane@intentmedia.co.uk

EPIC DIARIES

Mark Rein and **John Gaudiosi** explore how Unreal Engine 3 bolstered Spark Unilimited's Lost Planet 3

Players will encounter a horde of beastly aliens known as Akrids in Lost Planet 3, like this underwater viper (main). Above, game director, Matt Sophos

CAPCOM HAS ENLISTED Los Angeles developer Spark Unlimited to continue the adventures in the world of E.D.N. III.

Lost Planet 3 is a prequel to the original game, offering fans of the franchise a very different experience in the harsh, icy conditions of the unforgiving planet. The game combines on-foot, third-person perspective action with first-person mech combat against an array of monstrous Akrids.

For the first time in the best-selling franchise, the game is being developed with Unreal Engine 3 (UE3), which suits Spark well thanks to a long history of working with Unreal Engine technology.

"The previous two current-gen titles developed by us used UE3, so the decision to use it for *Lost Planet 3* was natural," says Matt Sophos, *Lost Planet 3* game director at Spark Unlimited. "It allows us to leverage our past experience and optimised workflow, thus increasing our efficiency and quality. UE3's robust toolset also makes it the best choice for level design because it enables us to hit the ground running from day one – laying out gameplay spaces and prototyping encounters with enemies and obstacles."

UPCOMING EPIC ATTENDED EVENTS:

DICE Summit
February 2013
Las Vegas, USA

Cloud Gaming Europe
February 2013
London, UK

Please email: ***licensing@epicgames.com*** *for appointments.*

POWER TOOLS

"The tools are extremely powerful for artists and designers who are creating content for a game," states Sophos. "UE3 has a fast iteration pipeline and the ease of use allows artists and designers to be directors so they can work on shaping the scene and the experience rather than simply creating assets that go into a game. Another major benefit to using Unreal is the amount of documentation and training videos made available by Epic. This can dramatically cut down our training time for new employees."

Although there are many tools to work with, Spark used Unreal Kismet and Unreal Matinee extensively for *Lost Planet 3*. Sophos says these tools empower level designers, artists, animators and sound designers to quickly prototype, iterate and polish gameplay scenarios and cinematics. With multiple departments being comfortable with Kismet and Matinee, engineers and designers are no longer the bottleneck when it comes to implementing assets, which facilitates rapid development and leads to a higher level of polish across the entire game.

Sophos says the communication between Spark and Epic has been great in its ongoing relationship, plus his studio has been able to utilise the Unreal Developer Network (UDN) for any issues throughout development.

"UDN offers a great community knowledge base that we can tap into any time a question arises for how to tackle tough problems," explains Sophos. "This has helped answer many questions that would normally have taken weeks of research, allowing us to iterate more quickly than if we had to recreate the process from scratch."

Spark has added proprietary technology on top of UE3, including dynamic storm states that punctuate the volatile nature of the hostile planet. The storm states allow for environmental storytelling, as well as giving the player new visuals that show the damage and effects of extreme weather conditions on the planet and its inhabitants.

"Most of our additions on top of UE3 are gameplay systems to support *Lost Planet 3*, such as a more robust third-person camera system, animation choreography, a collision system for larger creatures, a multi-threaded AI formation system and so on," he says.

MASTERS OF SCI-FI

One of the many things that stands out in this new adventure is the cinematic look and feel of the game. The world of E.D.N. III comes to life in a new way, thanks to the game's setting that takes place early on in the human habitation of the distant planet. Sophos says the art direction of *Lost Planet 3* has drawn many inspirations from visionary directors such as Ridley Scott and John Carpenter. Using UE3's volumetric lighting capabilities of the engine, Spark was able to more effectively create the moody atmosphere and lighting schemes to help create a sci-fi world that shows as nicely as the reference it draws upon.

"Even though it takes place in the future, we definitely took a lot of inspiration from the Old West frontier," says Sophos. "We also wanted a lived-in, retro vibe, so high-tech hardware took a backseat to improvised weapons and real world firearms. The Utility Rig feels more like a trucker's big rig than a mech. Surprisingly, there was only so much inspiration we could take from the arctic. Snow environments can easily devolve into looking like Antarctica, so we were careful to accentuate the alien nature of the landscape to constantly remind players this is not Earth."

In addition, Spark aims to deliver a campaign that's massive in scope yet fuelled by an intimate story and down-to-earth characters that drive a player's desire to see what happens next. It is also pushing the multiplayer experience, and has chosen to implement a robust suite of gameplay modes that are separate from the single-player narrative campaign in order to best serve the needs of both experiences. *Lost Planet 3* is out on Xbox 360, PS3 and PC in 2013. ■

Thanks to Spark Unlimited for speaking with freelancer John Gaudiosi for this feature.

To discuss licensing opportunities for the Unreal Engine, please email:
licensing@epicgames.com

FOR RECRUITMENT OPPORTUNITIES PLEASE VISIT: www.epicgames.com/careers

quality matters

Whether it's your new Console, PC, Handheld or Smartphone Game, the quality of your product matters to us.

QA Localisation ▪ Functionality ▪ Compliance
User Experience ▪ Compatibility

TESTRONIC laboratories **talk to us.** we can help.

www.testroniclabs.com ▪ talk@testroniclabs.com ▪ +44 (0) 2070 421 700

UNITY FOCUS

What does Unity's new Wii U deal mean to developers of every size?

WII U SUPPORT
What is it? A new deal that grants Nintendo the right to distribute Unity to in-house, external and third-party licensee developers
www.unity3d.com

unity
Wii U
HOME
TV
CONTROL
POWER
START
SELECT
X
Y
A
B

With Nintendo supporting Unity with the Wii U, a wider range of developers than ever before will now have access to the engine

THAT THE TEAM behind Unity has moved to support the soon to be released Wii U is not in itself too surprising.

The engine is infamously prolific across numerous platforms, and has long supported the current generation Wii. Unity has seen its foothold in Nintendo's home nation of Japan increase significantly in recent years, and the Wii U's variety of inputs is bound to attract the kind of developers that the tools outfit relishes in serving.

What is surprising, though, is the recent news that Unity's deal with the platform holder will also grant Nintendo the right to distribute the development engine to its in-house, external and third-party licensee developers.

ACCESS FOR ALL

Put simply, access to developing for Wii U means access to Unity. It's a big moment for the once diminutive engine outfit.

"This is a huge step forward for Unity," confirms company CEO David Helgason. "We all know how big and current and historically important Nintendo is, so it's really cool for us."

And the reason this development is so significant? According to Helgason this is because the news marks the start of a process with dual benefits.

"Two things are happening," offers Helgason. "Nintendo is taking Unity to its ecosystem of studios, from first-party to third-party and so on, making sure they have access not just to the engine, but to the support. And then at the same time, we're turning that round and making sure those in the Unity community can have access."

Just how that access will be distributed and shared is yet to be confirmed, and it will likely be sometime before the finer details are in place, but one thing is for certain. The Wii U deal further ices the cake that is Unity's long established goal of democratising games development.

Too often, the concept of democracy as a way to share games making is seen as a process that only serves smaller developers, where once high-end tools were made accessible to bedroom coders and hobbyists. True democracy, however, means serving the games making community as a whole, from the hip microstudios to the giants of triple-A.

> ***"Giving Unity to a big ecosystem like Nintendo's really does extend that vision of democratising games development."***
> David Helgason, Unity

"Giving Unity to the really big studios, and to a big ecosystem like that of Nintendo's, as well as all our existing 1.2 million developers really does extend that original vision of democratising games development," offers Helgason, who hopes his company can smooth the process of development that connects every developer, regardless of size.

"Developing for new consoles can be scary for a lot of studios, and there's all the horror stories about working with new consoles," he states. "We've tried to offer a really smooth process with what we're doing here, and I think doing that in a way in which all those very different developers work with is a huge part of that democracy too."

SERVING THE SECOND SCREEN

The Wii U is, of course, a rather atypical platform, with its tablet controller, numerous inputs and second screen. Yet in spite of that distinctive make-up, Unity insists adapting its core technology to support the platform was not as complex as many might expect.

"It's not actually so scary," says Helgason of the technical challenge of moving to support Wii U. "Nintendo are very smart, and they're an amazing company.

"They're over 120 years old, and they run the company very conservatively. They know what they are doing, and yet they are very creative. And they take that approach to development tech too."

From Helgason's perspective, moving from making games for the GameCube to the development environment of the current Wii was designed by Nintendo to be a relatively smooth process, and the Wii U dev kit is, he says, comparibly welcoming.

"The hardware changes with each generation can be significant, but the development methodologies, tools and the APIs and stuff like that – while not the same – are certainly smooth transitions," concludes Helgason. "That's really good for Unity, as we already support the Wii."

With the finer details still to be nailed into place, there's much more to learn, but one thing is almost assured. The Wii U deal will see more large studios embrace the engine, and more small operations have access to a next generation console. Unity's founding dream of democracy is ever closer to being an absolute reality.

HEARD ABOUT

John Broomhall talks to Lionhead's Russell Shaw and Steve Brown about the latest Fable

Fable: The Journey
Developer: Lionhead Studios
Platforms: Xbox 360
www.lionhead.com

"I FIND THE black keys on a piano really scary," jokes *Fable*'s renowned composer, Russell Shaw, when citing reasons for using the mixolydian scale as the basis for his latest music score.

For the layman, he explains the musical scale is comprised of 'all the white keys on a keyboard played over a G root'. The end result is an overwhelmingly Celtic feel reflecting central protagonist Gabriel's ancient tribal background and a soundtrack which subliminally melds with much of the Scottish Highlands-inspired scenery through which he travels. With longtime collaborators Allan Wilson, plus the Slovac National Symphony Orchestra, a team of percussionists from the Philharmonia and the Pinewood Singers onboard – all embellished by the able talents of ace Celtic instrument specialist, Bob White, Russell Shaw assembled a triple-A music team for *Fable: The Journey*.

With the self-evident success and fans' deep appreciation of his previous work on the now almost hallowed franchise – not to mention game design legend Peter Molyneux's high praise – was starting yet another *Fable* a dream or a nightmare?

"It was daunting," reveals Shaw. "I had some classic writer's block and battled for a while at the start. Then came this hallelujah moment when I got the main Albion theme which I'm still really pleased with – definitely a high point from this game for me."

Shaw certainly got into his stride producing an overall total of some four-to-five hours of music for the game, taking alternative versions into account. This is approaching double the amount for any of his previous projects.

DOWN THE LINE

So, given the generally linear nature of *Fable: The Journey*, was there any call to bring interactive music to the experience?

"Yes, actually, there was," says Shaw. "Sure, the music is pretty much straight linear cues for much of the game, but one area where we did require interactivity was combat. It can go in certain directions depending on what you do as a player so we realised early on we'd need something quite dynamic, changing on-the-fly.

"Using Wwise meant we had a ready-made interactive music system which could be as basic or as complex as we wanted to make it. We opted for relatively simple dynamics, using fade-ins and fade-outs of alternative track versions – downbeat, middle and higher intensities – with stingers on key trigger points. It works really well."

To help achieve the sense of dynamic intensity, Shaw embarked on something of a percussion-fest.

"Some years ago, I saw Stomp – the band that use makeshift percussion instruments like oilcans and dustbin lids to create immensely complex rhythms. It was amazing and beautiful," admits Sure.

"I decided I wanted to do something like that for *The Journey*. So Allan and I went for a tour of Bell Percussion in London, who supply instruments for most of the major movie productions like *Harry Potter* and *Star Wars*. We literally went around the place drawing up a shopping list of about sixty instruments, including Chinese, African, Samba and Celtic sets. Then we hired Air Studios for a day and got six percussionists from the Philharmonia down and had them create and record rhythmic layers. The result was fantastic and that's what I used to build up our combat layers for the interactive music system."

> ***"Sure, the music is pretty much straight linear cues for much of the game, but one area where we did require interactivity was combat."***
>
> Russell Shaw, Lionhead

That Russell Shaw was able to focus for the most part on creating the game's music score is testament to how well and how quickly new-kid-on-the-block, Steve Brown – brought in to direct sound design in-house at Lionhead – bedded into the project.

A FABLED FREINDSHIP

"Soon after Steve got involved, it became obvious he was more than capable of taking the role of sound supervisor, and we formed a very strong working relationship," say Shaw of Lionhead's latest audio recruit.

"I'm a big *Fable* fan, so it was an incredible opportunity for me," adds Brown. "Russ and I would often have creative conversations about how we might like the tone in a particular area to be – would we lead with sound design here or music there for dramatic effect, and how best to realise all the beauty we wanted to inject.

"We structured things in a movie-like way, compartmentalising aspects of the audio – music, dialogue, the horse and cart travelling experience, the creatures, the environment and so on. The sound design was divvied up between myself, our central audio team at Microsoft Studios and Soundelux in Hollywood, plus foley recording at Pinewood Studios in Shepperton.

"The game world of Albion is so rich and it's kind of instinctive how to do the sound for it – plus we have such a great canon of sound design from the previous *Fable* titles to reference. Having the breadth of talent that worked on the sound – some 35 people in all – and being able to pull all that together and actually let people breathe and be creative rather than try to micro-manage the sound design is something I'm really happy about. Specifically I guess the stand out sound feature for me has to be the horse and how we got such emotion into the horse vocals." ■

Top-to-bottom: Russell Shaw, composer for the Fable series and Steve Brown, sound supervisor at Lionhead

John Broomhall is an independent audio director, consultant and content provider.
E: develop@johnbroomhall.co.uk
www.johnbroomhall.co.uk

4T2

WARNING

WORKING FOR 4T2 WILL DAMAGE YOUR HEALTH!

Side effects include:

- **Overwhelming nausea** from the smell of fresh sea air - for acute withdrawal symptoms we can provide packets of stale city smog
- **LEGO® build burnout syndrome –** the large scale *Star Wars* models are particularly stressful: so much battleship grey
- **Awkward moments of physical intimacy** with celebrities at award ceremonies. Generally just hugs and handshakes but you never know

Now you've ignored the health warnings, let's get on with the job advert:

EXPERIENCED GAME CODERS WANTED

Join our award winning Bournemouth agency
Create mobile, tablet and web games for world-leading brands

www.4T2.co.uk/careers

WINNER
newmediaage
awards 2012 BrightRoll

4T2: GRAND PRIX AWARD WINNERS FOR

LEGO HERO FACTORY

DIRECTORY

The world's premier listing of games development studios, tools, outsourcing specialists, services and courses…

SERVICES SPOTLIGHT:
Trailer Farm in action
p66

TOOLS SPOTLIGHT:
Foundry's Mari
p68

TRAINING SPOTLIGHT:
Bournemouth University
p70

KEY CONTACTS

Artery Studios	+36 20 586 8006	www.artery-studios.com
Blitz Games Studios	+44 192 688 0000	www.blitzgamesstudios.com
Codeplay	+44 131 466 0503	www.codeplay.com
Epic Games	+1 919 870 1516	www.epicgames.com
inComm	+44 148 955 6700	www.incomm-europe.com
Testronic Labs	+44 207 042 1700	www.testroniclabs.com
University of Hull	+44 148 246 5951	www.hull.ac.uk

develop DIRECTORY

GREAT ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES

RATES
1/4 page: £450 (or £200 per month if booked for a minimum of six months)

Contact:
Alex.Boucher@intentmedia.co.uk

T: 01992 535 647

inComm®

Monetise your Gaming Properties
with an Award-Winning
Prepaid Solution
that's currently servicing over
225,000 retail locations worldwide

Online | Console MMOG | and More!

Contact us at **enquiries@incomm-europe.com**
or **+44 1489 556700**

RECRUITER HOT SEAT

Rare's studio head Craig Duncan drops need-to-know recruitment details about how you can join ones of Britain's oldest, most beloved studios and work on Windows 8 and Kinect

What are the benefits of working at a studio such as Rare?
Rare is in a pretty unique position. As a first party developer for Microsoft, our remit is to showcase amazing entertainment experiences for all current and future Microsoft platforms, including Xbox 360, Kinect and now Windows 8. What this means is that we work on very exciting projects at the cutting-edge of the industry. We have great resources, a fantastic facility and talented people.

Being part of the Microsoft Studios family opens up excellent career opportunities within the studio, and also our sister studios across the UK, Canada, US and the wider Microsoft business divisions.

How many staff are you currently looking to take on? And from what fields specifically?
Firstly, we are always looking to take on talented people – we realise that the right talent and right role may not always align from a timing perspective. We presently have open roles across all our disciplines on our careers site, at all levels from graduate to senior.

Console experience is important, but as Windows 8 is a big deal for the studio we are also interested in looking beyond that to developers with PC and touch experience. We aim for a blend of expertise, from individuals with deep skills to generalists who can do a little of everything including prototyping in small teams.

What perks are available to those working at the studio?
In addition to working on future-defining projects, we have a great staff benefits package. We care about the careers and growth of all our people, and we also know that they like to have engaging things going on around the studio.

So we have an events team whose charter is to organise a wide range of team events, both on-site and off-site. We have a subsidised restaurant with Starbucks coffee and regular barbeques within our 100-plus acres of countryside grounds. And our fitness trainer makes sure that we have opportunities to workout properly twice a week during the summer.

What should aspiring developers do with their CV to get to an interview?
Show that you have a passion for being the best and changing the world. Be clear on how you made a difference or a significant contribution in whatever you have achieved. Show your passion for creativity and innovation – we are every bit as interested in what you are capable of doing as what you have done already.

Who is the best interviewee you have ever had and how did they impress you?
All of the best interviewees were hired and are now in the team. Passionate and creative people impress us. Show drive and ambition to take ownership of your area, go beyond what others do – that's what excites us.

And who was the worst?
Interesting question. We'd have to say that our interview structure enables all potential candidates to sell their skills, experience and industry knowledge in a positive way.

What advice would you give jobseekers for a successful interview interview at your studio?
Know your subject, be passionate and show us clearly what you are capable of achieving. Interviewers understand how it feels to be on both sides of the process, but they still need to see your A-game. Be sure to communicate well, not just during the interview but before and after if you have the opportunity – whatever your role, clear communication between individuals, teams and disciplines is the foundation for our results.

Study the industry and be knowledgeable about things that other companies and games have recently achieved in your field. We don't always need applicants to be familiar with the world of games, but it does ease the road ahead in more ways than one.

Being a Kinect-focused studio, how difficult or straightforward is it to hire new developers?
More accurately, we're an innovation-focused studio developing entertainment to showcase Microsoft platforms; recently we've focused on the huge potential of Kinect for creativity and audience appeal. As a studio we always have a number of

BIO
Name: Craig Duncan
Title: Studio Head
www.rare.co.uk

> *"Console is important, but Windows 8 is a big deal for the studio and we are also interested in looking to those with PC and touch experience."*
>
> Craig Duncan, Rare

GET THAT JOB

Development specialists offer advice on how you can bag that career leap

THIS MONTH: ENGINE PROGRAMMER

"As an engine programmer, you need to be a smart and open-minded person, aware of the whole games development process.

"You are required to find technical solutions and deliver quality foundation systems.

"It's highly beneficial to hold a natural sense of curiosity. You must be driven to find out how things work, solve why some things don't, but also imagine how they could evolve in the future.

"You will have a good knowledge of C++ and, of course, skills related to the games industry, such as rendering, architecture, networking, tools and so on.

"A proven background in having shipped a commercial console title is well regarded by employers."

Nicolas Bécavin,
Lead Platform Programmer, Asobo Studio

SIX-SECOND STUDIO SPOTLIGHT

TALISMAN
TALISMAN
TALISMAN

TALISMAN
PROLOGUE

- Nomad Games rose from the ashes of THQ Warrington, which was working on *Warhammer* titles
- Its five 'nomads' hale from the likes of Infogrames, Rage Games and Juice Games
- Nomad partnered with Games Workshop when it saw the growing trend in virtual board games on touch screen devices
- Andy Bate and Carl Jackson, are big fans of the board game *Talisman*; Nomad's first project
- It's using Marmalade to build games for PC, mobiles and tablets
- "We have ideas about where to take *Talisman*'s style of gaming and we'll be looking to expand those," says commercial director Don Whiteford
www.nomadgames.co.uk

ideas bubbling. The important thing for Rare is that the people who join us do so because they believe in our approach and the opportunities it unlocks for them, not only in the tech we currently work with. Our custom-built HQ and location right in the heart of the country offer us many extra benefits, but our recruitment net is cast wide as we want to find the best people in the world rather than just the closest.

The UK is currently going through big changes regarding ICT and computer science at university. Do you think games development education in the UK is good enough at the moment?
It is getting better and we meet some fantastic people through our intern and graduate schemes who fill us with confidence. We do a huge amount of work across Microsoft to support education, from primary school age through to university programmes.

Is there anything else you wish to add about recruitment at your studio or in games development in general?
We have an amazing studio with a heritage not many can match, and building on the foundations of our recent commercial success, we are now at a pivotal time with industry-changing opportunities in our future. If that's appealing, you're the best at what you do and like the sound of a career at one of the top studios in the world – get in touch.

NEW STUDIO ALERT!

OUT OF THE strain and sleepless nights of Dare+, a studio is born. Michael Walker, Kraig Walker and Carla Johnston met on the first day their Dare+ course in July 2012.

After completing the course and demoing their products at the Dare Protoplay festival in August, the trio decided to form a new company, Aphelio.

Team Aphelio has been working together for less than six months, and are still without an office, but they are already working for clients on commercial contracts.

Aphelio will focus on making social and casual games for HTML5 as well as platforms which are "under served". PlayStation Vita and, by extension, PlayStation Mobile specifically.

The studio is currently being funded by the trio themselves, but they're in the process of seeking investment.

"By looking at the mistakes that have been made in the past we've focused more on the experience rather than the conventional ideas," says Kraig Walker, co-founder and CTO of Aphelio.

Kraig was chairman of the IGDA Scotland Chapter aged 18. With Aphelio, he's eager to carve out a new style of games company. "Aphelio is all about testing the limits of what people perceive to be possible in gaming. We think people will find what we have to be very interesting and, most importantly, original."

Aphelio's other co-founder and CEO, Michael Walker, was formerly a community coordinator at Jagex. While Johnston, the studio's artistic director, is a graduate of games art and design at the Norwich University College of the Arts.

Eager to form new game ideas and reach new audiences with them, Kraig says they're doing it for the love of exploration.

"By living on the bleeding-edge both technologically and in our design approach, our work will definitely belong on the platforms we push them on, and hopefully inspire a new approach to game development," says Kraig.
www.aphelio.com

MOVERS AND SHAKERS

This month: Applifier, Sega Hardlight, Funcom and d3t

APPLIFIER Finland-based mobile network Applifier has hired **OSCAR CLARK** as an evangelist.

Clark, who previously held the same position at Papaya Mobile, will bring his knowledge and enthusiasm for mobile games to bear on Applifier's services, which aim to 'amplify' developers' mobile titles.

The hat-wielding regular of the games conference scene has been championing social and freemium games over the last couple years; providing his own brand of insight.

At Applifier, Clark's will initially be evangelising for its upcoming Everyplay product, which is pitched as a new way to discover games.

"I believe its time we redefined what social means in terms of mobile play and to see if we can create new kinds of social interactions which have a purpose in their own right," said Clark.

"I believe that's exactly what the Applifier team are doing with their Everyplay product and its great to be joining them. This service is exactly what's needed to help share those magical moments of play and create new ways to communicate our common love of games."

Jussi Laakkonen, CEO of Applifier, added: "Oscar's passion for social and mobile games combined with his outspoken attitude has made him a regular highlight at developer conferences. We can't wait to see how he can apply his knowledge and vision to Everyplay to enable developers and players to share meaningful moments of gameplay."

SEGA HARDLIGHT The former creative director of Codemasters' Southam studio is heading up Sega's new Hardlight studio.

SION LENTON (*left*) has taken the position of studio manager and has joined the founder and studio director **Chris Southall** (*right*), who was previously chief technology officer at Sega Europe and Codemasters.

Based in Solihull, Sega Hardlight is focusing on the development of digital titles for handheld platforms, such as iOS, Android and Windows Phone.

The studio will develop its own original titles as well as leveraging Sega's wide array of IP, and will work across a variety of genres. A PS Vita title it has been working on is now on hold.

As well as working on its own titles, Hardlight has previously provided support for a number of Sega titles, such as *Sonic Unleashed*, *Empire: Total War*, *Bayonetta* and *Vanquish*.

"We have no plans to limit ourselves to one genre. Our ethos is more exploration of ideas and finding mechanics that we feel will stimulate and excite our users," said Lenton. "We have a huge box of toys to play with and we've only just begun. You'll see some more surprising and delighting uses of Sega and original IP."

It currently houses 21 permanent staff, some of whom from the *Sega Rally* team and Sega's R&D division. The Solihull division will also use a number of contract staff to develop various tiles on short cycles of four to eight months.

FUNCOM Funcom has promoted **JOEL BYLOS** to game director on the company's recently launched MMO, *The Secret World*.

Bylos will work together with creative director Ragnar Tørnquist on expanding the game with post-launch content. His other responsibility will be to manage the development team along with Scott Junior.

Bylos has proven experience developing post-launch content for MMOs, and previously helped shape *Secret World* as lead content designer.

"Being given the opportunity to lead the game into a bold, new future is definitely a dream come true for me," said Bylos. "I am very proud of what we as a team have created with *The Secret World*, and it is truly a brilliant canvas that will allow us to create more groundbreaking MMO experiences for many years to come."

Bylos previously served as lead designer on *Rise of the Godslayer*, the acclaimed expansion pack for Funcom's previous MMO, *Age of Conan: Hyborian Adventures*.

D3T Two new faces have joined the ranks of code outsourcing business d3t. **NOEL AUSTIN**, formerly of Juice Games, THQ Digital Studios UK and Relic Entertainment, joins along with **SARAH HOWARTH**, who has spent time at Juice Games, Bizarre Creations and Traveller's Tales Fusion.

"It has been a busy and exciting year for the company," said Jamie Campbell, co-owner and commercial director.

"We are delighted to welcome Noel and Sarah on board. Having worked with them both previously, we know they will provide us with increased capacity whilst maintaining our commitment to delivering the highest quality service possible."

d3t was set up by Jamie Campbell and Steve Powell in 2010 to offer consulting to technology firms.

Services & Tech Recruiter Hot Seat

We speak to Atlassian's vice president of talent **Joris Luijke** about positions at the enterprise software maker

What makes Atlassian different from other enterprise software makers?
First, many engineers in other enterprise companies develop tools that will be used in different company functions – HR, finance or sales.

Atlassian, however, makes software that helps businesses plan, build and launch great software. Therefore, our software products don't just solve problems for our 22,000 customers – they also help us. It's fun working at a company where you get to experience your own products, improvements and innovations on a daily basis.

What benefits do you offer staff?
We offer all sorts of perks, from free lunches to extra leave and working at a charity of choice. We even offer new hires a holiday before they start, so that they can begin their new job refreshed.

Which disciplines are you in need of?
Javascript developers, designers, application support engineers.

And how have your recruitment needs changed?
Consumer software has set new benchmarks for software design. For enterprise software, the emphasis on product design and front-end development has increased because people are often bombarded with more information than they can process. Today's products need to be easily navigable and intuitive to use.

Additionally, younger generations have grown up with smartphones, Facebook and Twitter, so they expect similar functionality from other technologies. Today's developers are as much engineers as they are designers, so we look for multifaceted candidates.

What opportunities are there for career progression?
A new adventure is always just around the corner for motivated employees. Atlassian has more than doubled in size during the past two years and is continuing to grow rapidly. Every month new teams and positions are formed to support new product or growth opportunities.

Atlassian also offers international secondments to enable cross-continent collaboration and knowledge sharing.

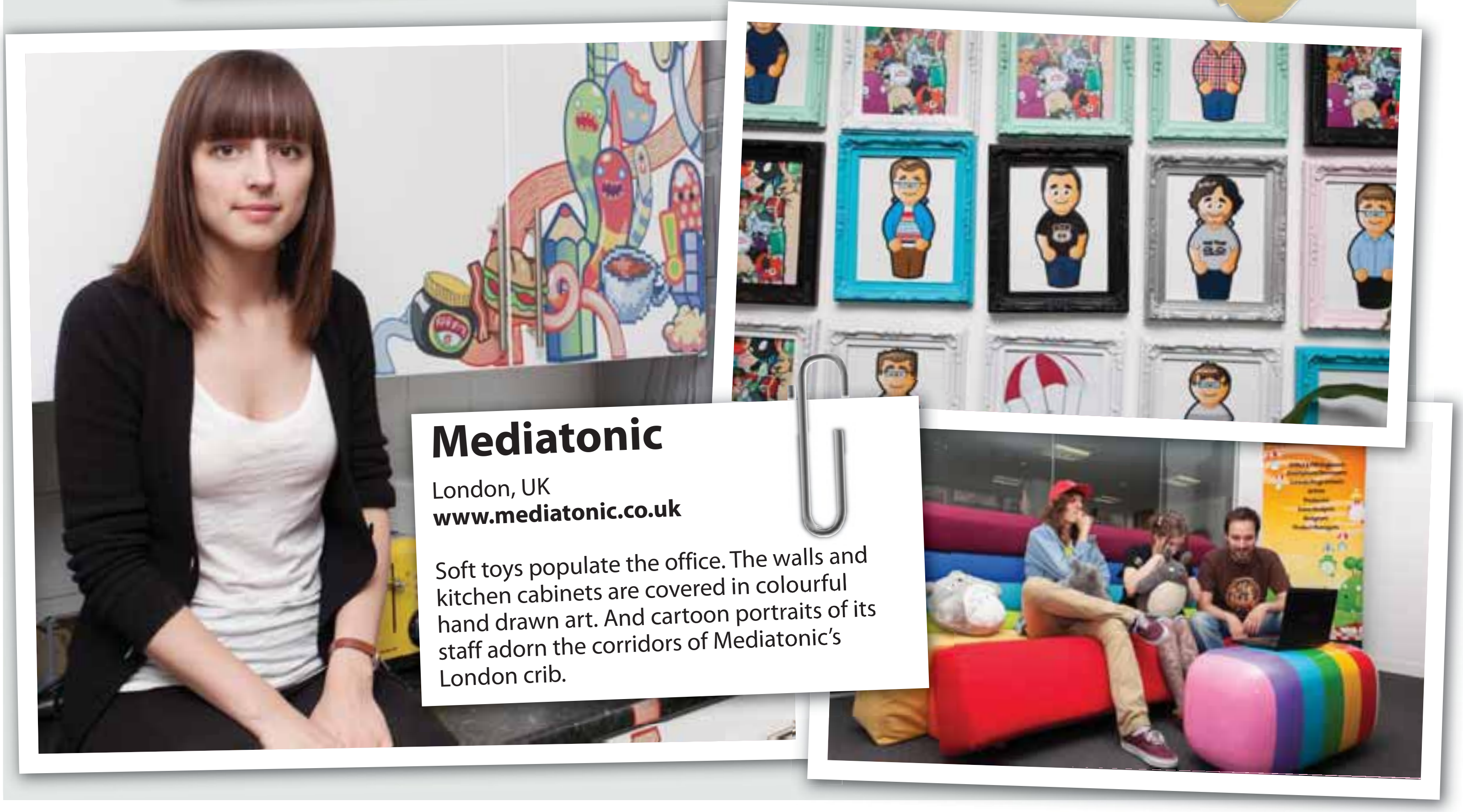
Why should prospective employees choose a role in enterprise software?
Enterprise software has come a long way. It's no longer just about building traditional heavyweight products sold in mega-deals to top executives. Even though some may find enterprise boring, the truth is that B2B software impacts small and large teams around the world daily. Every company on the planet is becoming, in essence, a software company. There are more lines of code in a Ford car than in Twitter and Facebook combined. Why not get in on the software revolution?
www.atlassian.com

Ubisoft Toronto

Toronto, Canada
www.ubisoftgroup.com

Now with 2,000 square feet of performance space to play with, just what is Ubi planning on motion capturing? Chariot pursuits? Mass scenes of panic? Whatever it is, it's good news for actors and stuntmen.

THIS IS **WHERE WE WORK**



Mediatonic

London, UK
www.mediatonic.co.uk

Soft toys populate the office. The walls and kitchen cabinets are covered in colourful hand drawn art. And cartoon portraits of its staff adorn the corridors of Mediatonic's London crib.

SERVICES SPOTLIGHT

This month: **The Trailer Farm**

THE TRAILER FARM is a creative agency specialising in trailers, promos, featurettes and 'making of' documentaries for the games industry.

Its USP is that its staff have a rich history in games development, making it well placed to sync with the developers and branding teams it works with in a streamlined way. It has provided its production services to some top tier games since it was founded in June 2011 by Tony and Daniel Porter – brothers who've worked in the creative teams for *Grand Theft Auto*, *Burnout*, *Split Second* and *Pure*.

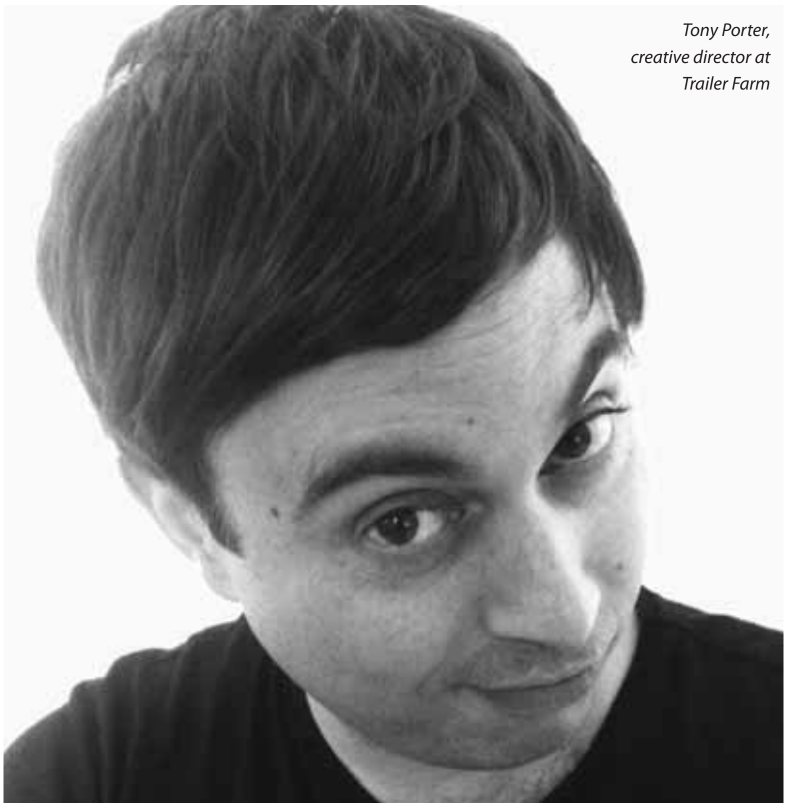
For clients, Trailer Farm handles all creative direction, scripting, game capture, video editing, audio design and localisation associated with them. The process starts with the game itself.

"We don't feel the need to use full CG in our pipeline," says creative director Tony Porter (*pictured left*). "We have some very high-end game capture kit, courtesy of Digital Foundry, which we use for pristine capturing of game footage across all platforms."

Next, a combination of Cinema 4D, Adobe After Effects, Photoshop, various 3D packages and Final Cut are used to create motion graphics and the wholesome visual goodness for the final edit. Porter adds that it "loves" to use lots of 2.5D in its work.

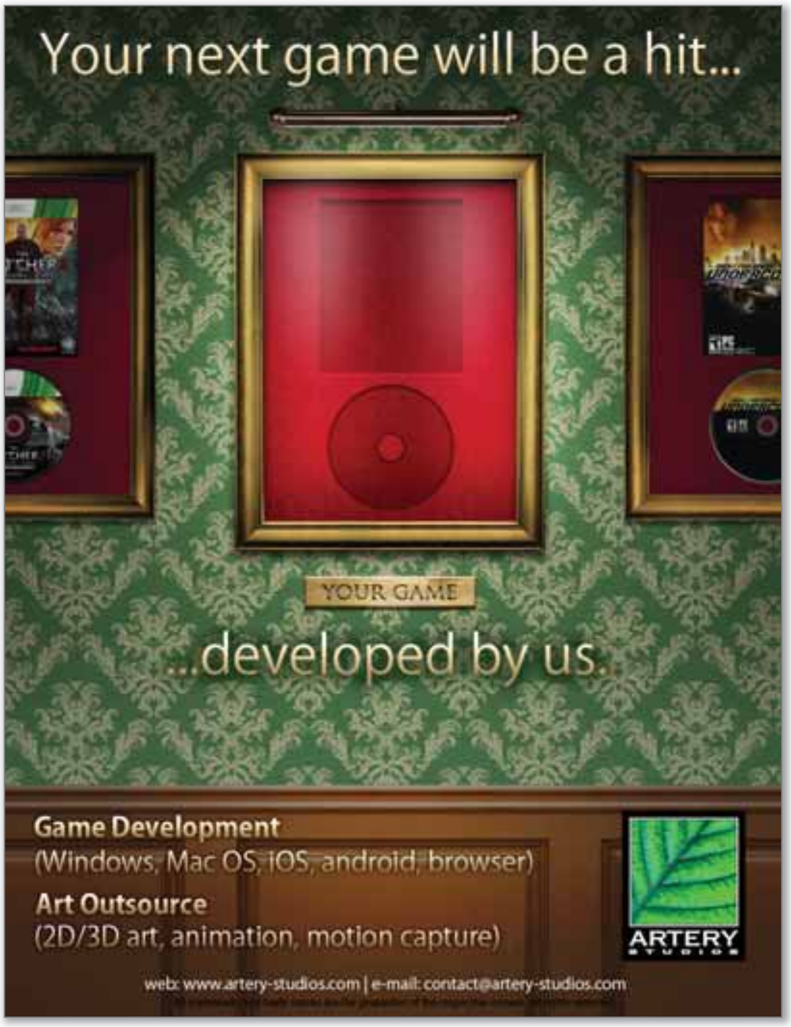
> ***"The games development cycle can be an extremely stressful time and the trailers themselves can sometimes be overlooked."***
>
> Tony Porter, Trailer Farm

Recently, it has produced lots of the video content for *Codemasters's Dirt: Showdown*, including the global TV spot campaign and all of the featurettes. Trailer Farm is working closely with Mind Candy, and is also putting its skills to use with Microsoft on the launch of Windows 8 and its accompanying apps. For examples, see the studio's showreel on its website.

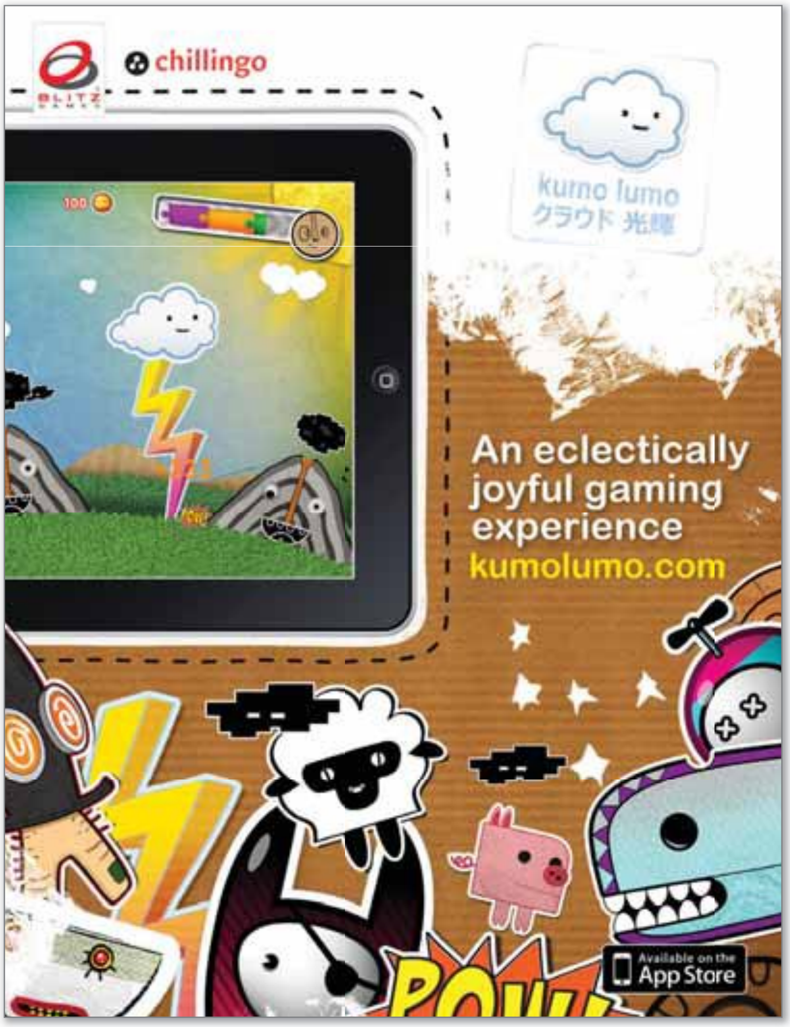


Tony Porter, creative director at Trailer Farm

Artery Studios www.artery-studios.com


Your next game will be a hit...
YOUR GAME
...developed by us.
Game Development
(Windows, Mac OS, iOS, android, browser)
Art Outsource
(2D/3D art, animation, motion capture)
ARTERY STUDIOS
web: www.artery-studios.com | e-mail: contact@artery-studios.com

Blitz Game Studios 01926 880000 www.blitzgamesstudios.com


BLITZ GAMES
chillingo
kumo lumo
クラウド 光輝
An eclectically joyful gaming experience
kumolumo.com
Available on the App Store
POW!

The Trailer Farm
Hove Business Centre, Unit 8
Fonthill Road
Brighton
BN3 6HA

T: +44 0 779 159 7802
E: tony@thetrailerfarm.com
W: www.thetrailerfarm.com

Dan Porter, creative director. Together, they are the Black Keys of the trailer circuits

Porter says a combination of total passion and focus on games, coupled with a huge wealth of knowledge and experience in the areas of games development, promos and marketing, are what make Trailer Farm what it is.

"We make it very easy for our clients when it comes to the things that matter, capturing great-looking sequences and executing them within a great idea. These factors put us in a unique position to create trailers and promos that resonate with developers, branding teams and gamers alike," explains Porter.

"We know from experience that the games development cycle can be an extremely stressful time and, more often than not, the trailers themselves can sometimes be overlooked or pushed to the back of the list, or even worse, handed over to an external company that may not have the specialist games knowledge required to create something that truly resonates with gamers themselves."

Which is why, Porter says, Trailer Farm is ready to step into the breach with a fresh perspective, delivering the goods for a quality campaign. The video production outfit recently formed a new branch, The Trailer Farm Mobile. Its mobile arm has been born from massive demand for the kind of services it offers for console developers, but for iOS and Android developers, who may not have access to the budgets of larger console and PC publishers.

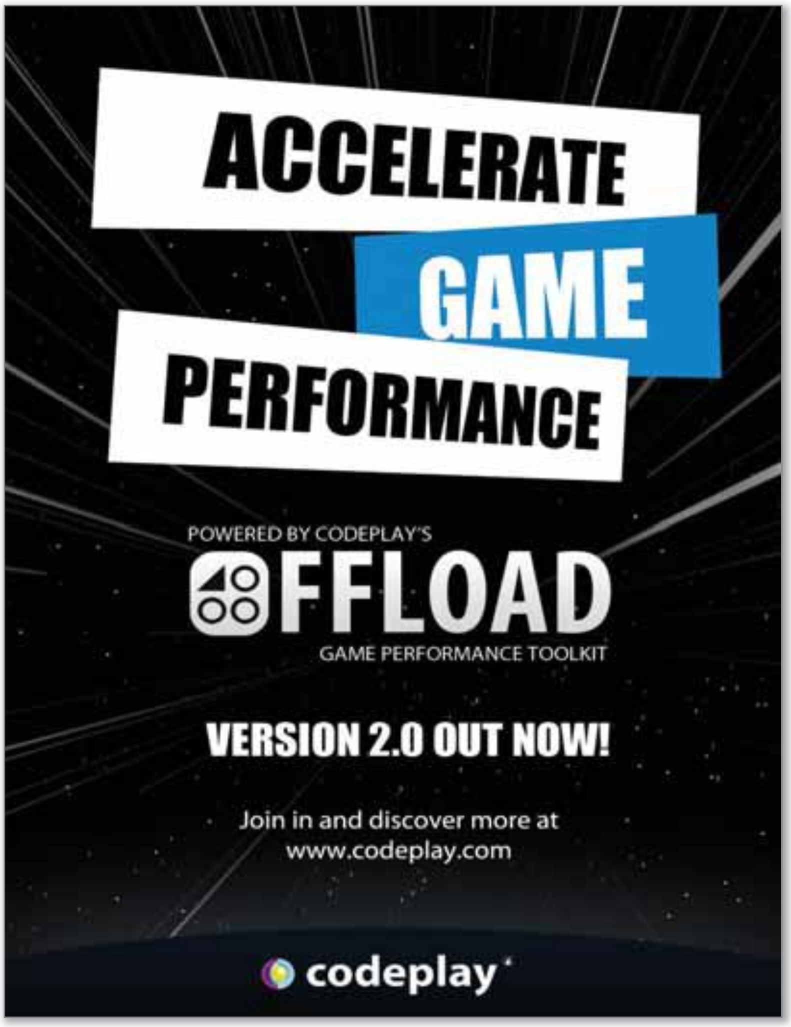
"We fully intend to bring all of the production values and techniques we use across to this new service, but at a fraction of the cost," says Porter.

Trailer Farm is currently taking bookings, and can be contacted if you are interested in discussing this new side to its business.

"We know how to get under the hood of a build, we understand all the nuances of in-game cinematography and know how to show a game in its very best light," says Porter.

The Trailer Farm
games trailers . promos . featurettes
www.thetrailerfarm.com

Codeplay 0131 466 0503 www.codeplay.com



ACCELERATE GAME PERFORMANCE

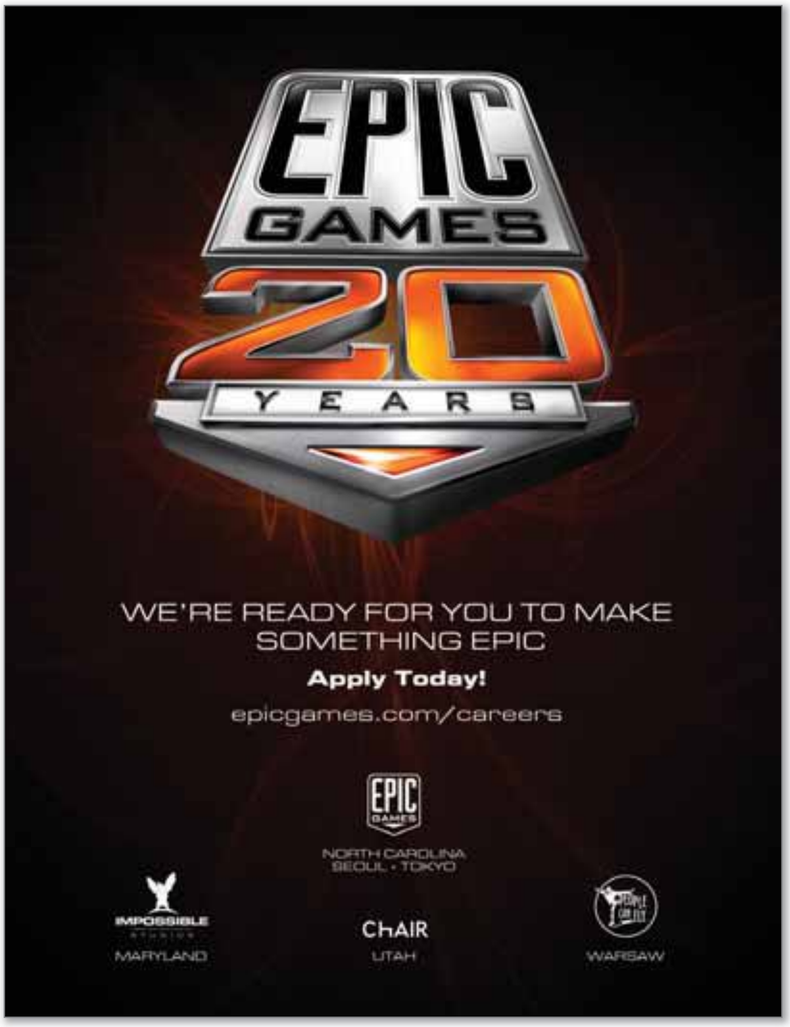
POWERED BY CODEPLAY'S OFFLOAD GAME PERFORMANCE TOOLKIT

VERSION 2.0 OUT NOW!

Join in and discover more at www.codeplay.com

codeplay

Epic +1-919-870-1516 www.epicgames.com



EPIC GAMES 20 YEARS

WE'RE READY FOR YOU TO MAKE SOMETHING EPIC

Apply Today!

epicgames.com/careers

EPIC GAMES
NORTH CAROLINA
SEOUL · TOKYO

IMPOSSIBLE STUDIOS
MARYLAND

ChAIR
UTAH

PEOPLE CAN FLY
WARSAW

TOOLS SPOTLIGHT

This month: **The Foundry**

LONDON-BASED VISUAL effects studio The Foundry was founded in 1996 by Bruno Nicoletti and Simon Robinson. In September 2012, it merged with animation firm Luxology.

Its portfolio of software has been widely used to create visual effects on major motion pictures, episodic TV work, commercials and, more recently, video games.

One of those tools is Mari, a powerful digital painting technology that was originally developed at Weta Digital for the production of James Cameron's 3D blockbuster, *Avatar*.

For *Avatar*, textures were going to play a critical role in creating a rich and varied set of assets that would draw the audience into all the detail of the characters and environments.

Mari was built from the ground up to deal with an incredible amount of complexity. Its roots are in film, but it's more versatile than that. It's now being used in functions from small CG projects and big games cinematics, right through to more niche areas such as cover art design.

"The reason I think we are seeing such wide application is that it simply lets artists get their heads down, get creative and paint," says Jack Greasley, Mari product manager at The Foundry.

Greasley describes Mari as a tool that was designed to take all the painful, stressful technical operations out of the process. Artists can load it up and start painting directly onto a 3D canvas. It can be easily modified to suit artists' preferences and workflow. For games specifically, it is possible to use in-game shaders and rendering technology, meaning that creations you texture in Mari will be the same when carried over into the game.

Examples of games the tool has already been used in are LucasArts' upcoming third-person shooter *Star Wars 1313* and *Sins of a Solar Empire*, where it was harnessed for creating in-game cinematics.

"Modern day audiences expect increasingly film-like visuals in all aspects of the media that they consume," says Greasley. "The team on *1313* have pulled together technology and experience from games, computer-generated features and visual effects work to get the best possible experience for the player."

Mari mirror testing a blue humanoid (above), a snail in the paint editor (right), Jack Greasley (far right).

inComm +44 (0) 1489 556700 www.incomm-europe.com

inComm®

Monetise your Gaming Properties with an Award-Winning **Prepaid Solution** that's currently servicing over 225,000 retail locations worldwide

Online | Console MMOG | and More!

Contact us at **enquiries@incomm-europe.com** or **+44 1489 556700**

Testronic Laboratories +44 (0) 2070 421 700 www.testroniclabs.com

quality matters

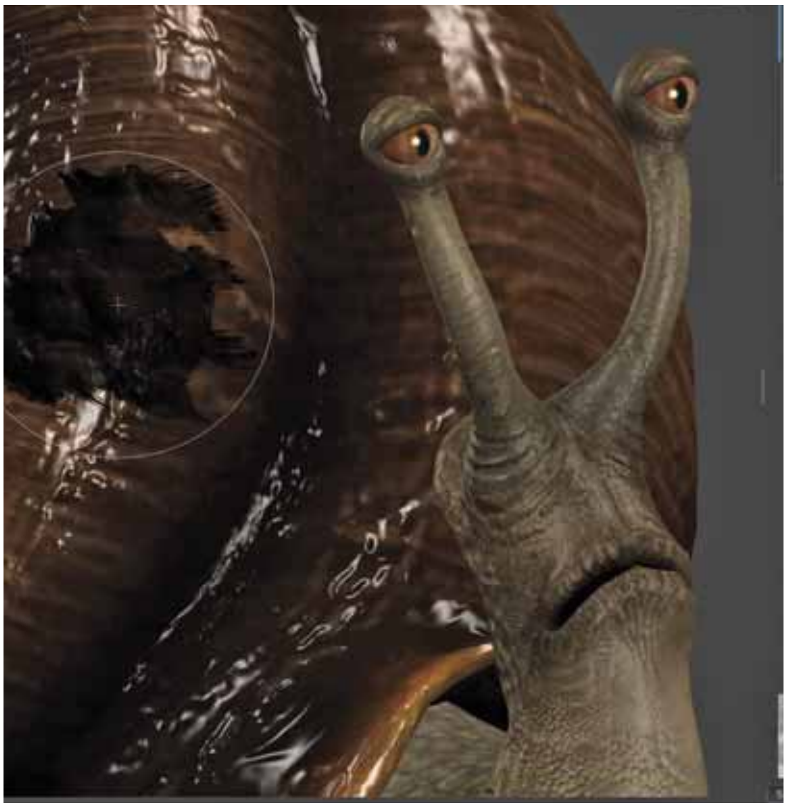
QA Localisation • Functionality • Compliance
User Experience • Compatibility

TESTRONIC laboratories **talk to us.** we can help.

talk@testroniclabs.com • +44 (0) 2070 421 700

The Foundry Visionmongers
The Communications Building, 6th Floor
48 Leicester Square
London, WC2H 7LT
United Kingdom

T: +44 0 207 968 6828
E: sales@thefoundry.co.uk
W: www.thefoundry.co.uk



The latest release, Mari 1.5, includes a number of specific developments that were implemented to help LucasArts create *Star Wars 1313*.

> ***"The reason I think we are seeing such wide use is that it simply lets artists get their heads down, get creative and paint."***
>
> Jack Greasley, The Foundry

Features include overlapping UV's, Maya Texture Export to handle textures in Maya with a single click, real-time shadows, DDS Cubemaps in the viewport, mirroring in the paint buffer to paint symmetrical objects easily, normal mapping functionality to paint normal maps on the fly and Photoshop ABR brush import, allowing artists to import their favourite custom brushes from Photoshop to use (See Mari in action: vimeo.com/47021260).

Mari is under rapid development based on customer feedback, with some new updates to its layering and shading systems coming in a future version of the tool.

As games strive for greater photorealism, Mari is one tool that will bring developers closer to achieving it.

"We are excited about the potential for Mari," concludes Greasley. "Our aims going forward are simply to stay focused on what our customers want from tools and to keep creating software that's in demand."

The University of Hull **+44(0) 1482 465951** **www.mscdegrees.com**

UNIVERSITY OF Hull

GAMES EDUCATION WITH A REPUTATION

- **BSc & MEng Computer Science with Games Development**
- **MSc Games Programming**

Images courtesy of Criterion Games

17 years of educating video game professionals

"The University of Hull have been a key partner for Criterion over the last 2 years, providing over 70% of our Graduate Engineering intake." Paul Ross, CTO, Criterion Games

"After some years working as a programmer, I decided to attend the MSc in Games Programming at Hull University. It was probably the best investment of my life. Now I'm a programmer at an AAA studio." Manuele Bonanno, MSc Graduate

www.mscdegrees.com

skillset APPROVED

Develop **01992 535647** **www.develop-online.net**

develop DIRECTORY

GREAT ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES

CONTACT: ALEX

alex.boucher@intentmedia.co.uk

Tel: 01992 535647

TRAINING SPOTLIGHT

This month: **Bournemouth University**

THE LURE OF the seaside is reason enough for some to choose to study at Bournemouth University. But for those considering games development, its courses – BSc and MSc in Computer Games Technology – aim to impart technical and transferable skills that will give students the best possible chance for gaining employment in the games industry.

Bournemouth's focus is firmly on technical skills, such as programming, predominantly in C++, the university's senior lecturer in creative technology Dr Christos Gatzidis tells *Develop*.

The undergraduate course covers all major parts of the development pipeline for a typical games studio from the first year onwards. For instance, C++ is introduced from day one, before building on API programming and beyond in the second and final year respectively. Other subjects covered include 3D modelling, texturing and level design in the first year, moving on to more advanced concepts, such as high polygon modelling or digital sculpting and scripting within a game engine.

"There is also a healthy dose of mathematical content in the first two years of the course as we feel that too is integral for a fuller understanding of related programming concepts," says Gatzidis (*pictured on opposite page*), something which many developers will be pleased to hear given comments from the creative industries about graduates' basic maths skills.

In the final year, students pick the area they have excelled in, out of the ones mentioned above, and specialise in that before progressing to the industry or postgraduate study. An optional work placement is also offered. Gatzidis says it has had students go onto non-games development placements, such as IBM, because of their technical abilities.

Bournemouth University has built sound contacts in games development itself, and regularly has guest talks from Ubisoft Reflections, SCEE, EA Criterion and others. Alongside these talks, it has an advisory board, which offers advice and guidance on course content, and for the last couple of years has been a member of TIGA.

The latter has helped it to network more efficiently and keep track of the changes affecting the industry, such as tax breaks and the shake-up to ICT, Gatzidis explains.

"We constantly strive for more industry engagement, both for the academic members of staff and for the students themselves, as we feel it is an essential part to education," he says.

Bournemouth's Talbot campus in the evening (below) and in the morning (right). Above, the atrium to the computer science building

Bournemouth University
School of Design, Engineering and Computing
Room P211, Poole House, Talbot Campus
Poole, Dorset, BH12 5BB
United Kingdom

T: +44 0 120 296 5135
E: enquiries@bournemouth.ac.uk
W: www.bournemouth.ac.uk

As the current course covers art and programming, it uses a fairly wide variety of software. Microsoft Visual Studio is its main programming platform, with DirectX and XNA being its main API choices, while both 3ds Max and Maya are used for modelling and animation.

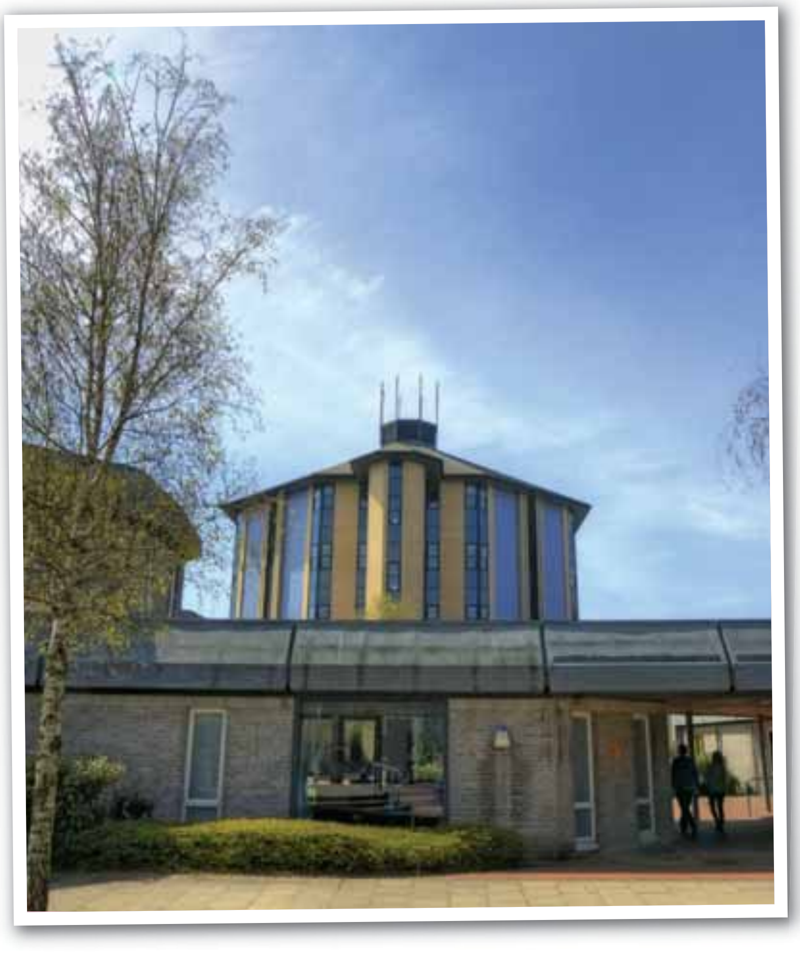
> ***“We constantly strive for more industry engagement for staff and students, as we feel it is an essential part to education.”***
> Dr Christos Gatzidis, Bournemouth University

More recently, it began using ZBrush, though mostly for a final year unit. Its primary choice of game engine for level design work has been the Unreal Development Kit (UDK), but it has used Unity in the past. Gatzidis affirms that it is constantly on the lookout to make sure the software and hardware it uses are to industry standards. The university’s investment in facilities is a testament to that, as it has just added another specialist games development lab for the new academic year.

Student numbers for the undergraduate games course have grown for the 2012 intake, which has prompted Gatzidis and his faculty to write a new course titled Games Programming. This will focus on programming skills even more closely than its existing course at the request of the industry. Units focus on object-oriented game engines, graphics and computational programming.

Bournemouth plans to continue to increase its course engagement with domestic and international games developers, and will be investigating Skillset accreditation in the near future.

“We believe that we are producing high-quality graduates who can be employed by domestic but also international games developers, and become crucial parts of the projects they have been assigned to,” Gatzidis says. “Moreover, as we also have a dedicated professional development strand of units, we believe that, other than joining existing studios, our graduates could move into the area of setting up their own independent companies, a possibility which offers huge potential today and many of our current students find very enticing.”



Dr Christos Gatzidis, course leader at Bournemouth University

CODA

A sideways look at the games industry

THE INDUSTRY IN 140 CHARACTERS

A month in tweets by the industry elite

@OnlyOneT
That feeling when you see Peter Molyduex tweet and think shit we've got a leak…
(Stuart Turner, Capcom)
October 3rd

@therealcliffyb
That moment when you realise you can tweet whatever the hell you want now because the PR people can't yell at you any more = gold.
(Cliffy B, no longer of Epic)
October 4th

@danpinchbeck
Anyone else duct-taping a hacksaw to a broom-handle for a three minute silence? #lowbudgetmourningascliffybleaves epic
(Dan Pinchbeck, thechineseroom)
October 4th

@LHTeddii
I just bought DLC for a Nintendo game… News just in: hell froze over, pigs are flying, and Mario is downloadable. #YouveChanged
(Ted Timmins, Lionhead)
October 4th

@DargeyBoy
Also - hats off to Sony for smashing the 5m mark. They sent us the best cake ever. I wish Sony sold 5m units every week. #cake
(Andy Young, EA)
October 12th

@danthat
The trouble with making a Steampunk game is it's VERY easy to find you've accidentally laid out some cogs and a rod like a cock and balls.
(Dan Marshall, Size Five Games)
October 16th

@OskarBurman
13% of the Swedes never or rarely use the internet. To me that's more shocking than the fact most 3yr olds are using it.
(Oskar Burman, Rovio)
October 17th

@dnost
I think @Shankymans will echo this thought but it's incredible the range of emotions running a studio can cause in just a day let alone week
(AJ Grand-Scrutton, Dlala)
October 18th

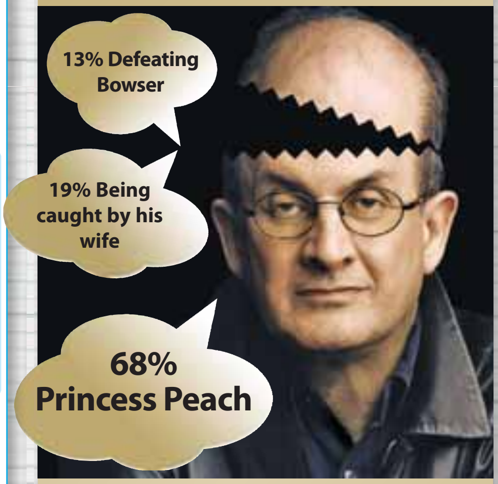
@ian_livingstone
I was dropped from @bbc5live this morning to talk comp science in schools but they did manage to report shortage of conkers in Scotland!
(Ian Livingstone, Eidos)
October 18th

@loonyboi
XCOM: EU is a remarkable achievement for Firaxis. I'd love to see some of what they learned on this applied back to the Civilization series.
(Jason Bergman, Bethesda)
October 19th

AN OPEN MIND

SALMAN RUSHDIE

This month we journey outside the games industry and into the mind of an iconic and controversial author who, some may be surprised to hear, is a gamer.



Extracts are from Salman Rushdie's new memoirs, curiously written and published in the third-person, and titled *Joseph Anton*.

On escaping the reality of his daily life: "He had grown fond of Mario the plumber and his brother Luigi, and sometimes *Super Mario World* felt like a happy alternative to the one he lived in the rest of the time.

On his wife's perspective of his taste for gaming: "'Read a good book,' his wife told him scornfully. 'Give it up.' He lost his temper. 'Don't tell me how to live my life,' he exploded, and she made a grand exit."

Finally, on his triumph after hours of toil, and without his wife to witness it: "He reached the end of his *Super Mario* game, defeating the big bad Bowser himself and rescuing the insufferably pink Princess Toadstool. He was glad Marianne was not there to witness his triumph."

IT FIGURES: APPLE IPAD MINI

Late in October, Apple confirmed the creation of the iPad mini, a new tablet design that, at **7.2 mm** thin and **0.68 pounds** in weight, is some **23 per cent** thinner and **53 per cent** lighter than the third generation iPad. Designed for use in one hand, the mini features a **7.9-inch** multi-touch display, and promises to deliver **10 hours** of battery life. It runs, of course, on **iOS 6**, which introduces over **200** new features. Featuring the same number of pixels as the first **two** generations of iPads, it can thus run over **275,000** apps designed specifically for iPad. iPad mini also features dual-band **802.11n** Wi-Fi support for speeds up to **150 Mbps**, and a **five megapixel** iSight camera. It runs on an Apple-designed **A5 chip**, and the Wi-Fi and SIM model will be sold for a suggested retail price of **£369** for the **16GB** model, **£449** for the **32GB** model and **£529** for the **64GB** model.

THE DEVELOP DICTIONARY

Our guide to games development terminology brings you the best and the worst of industry jargon. This month we bring you the letter D

D-Pad – *A proto thumbstick now used for navigating menus and selecting weapons*

DAU – *Usually reserved for social gaming and attracting advertising, DAU is an acronym for Daily Active Users; the number of individuals that access your game every day*

Debug – *To correctly identify errors in code, or the consoles shipped out for various non-consumer uses*

Defect seeding – *A cunning way for coders to give QA methods and solutions a taste of their own medicine. Intentional bugs are left in code to test the thoroughness of QA*

Demoscene – *The predominantly European games development-related hobbyist scene where non-interactive demos are coded on various hardware, typically with a focus on remarkably small file sizes*

Depth pass – *Essentially a technique within game lighting whereby surfaces positioned within a shadow's volume are evaluated so as to determine affected pixels*

Develop – *It's not our place to say. It's a magazine. Turn to page one to find out more*

Developer – *A person or company that makes games, apparently*

Diffused lighting – *Light scattered to avoid unwanted highlighting in game worlds*

Divide and choose – *A mechanic from the world of board games design applicable to multiplayer games whereby one player divides resources and then a rival chooses the piece. Also popular at children's parties to solve cake-based dilemas. Sadly left out in Portal*

Doppler effect – *An audio effect that sees a sound emanating from a moving object increase in frequency as it nears the point of listening. Easy to hear in the real world on roadsides frequented by passing lorries with horn-happy drivers*

DRM – *Our old friend Digital Rights Management, designed to counter illegal piracy and copying of games. It also serves to infuriate paying consumers*

Dry audio – *Sound effects and music left free of tinkering both in and post recording*

Dynamic advertising – *A way of tailouring in-game ads to individual players demographic make-up. Either soulless capitalism or an implementation of contextual relevance and realism, depending on your socio-political grounding*

Dynamic audio – *In-game sound that adapts to player actions*

Dynamic plot – *A flexible game narrative influenced by player actions. See Heavy Rain*

develop FORWARD PLANNER

DECEMBER 2012 / JANUARY 2013

30 UNDER 30
Develop shines its talent spotlight on the best young achievers shaping the industry's future

BUILD SPECIAL FEATURE: MOTION CAPTURE
A detailed look at mo-cap techniques, hardware and tools, from desktop solutions to fully rigged stages

REGIONAL FOCUS: SCOTLAND

EVENTS:
Develop Quiz, London – January 30th

FEBRUARY 2013

RECRUITMENT SPECIAL
Our annual look at the jobs market includes advice for CVs, portfolios and interviews; guidance on promotions; and more

SALARY SURVEY
Having pooled data from hundreds of professionals across every facet of the industry we bring you the results of our most far reaching survey yet, and analyse how salaries are changing

SMART TV
As the entire entertainment industry circles around the new generation of web-connected televisions, we explore what matters to games developers looking at the platform

REGION FOCUS: HAMBURG

EVENTS:
Casual Connect, Hamburg – February 7th to 9th

MARCH 2013

CONSULTANCY SPECIAL
Can independent advice really be worth the consultancy fee? We ask studios with experience, and seek advice on getting the most from consultancy straight from the source

BUILD SPECIAL FOCUS: GAME ENGINES
From the triple-A giants to the bedroom coding upstarts, we round-up the engines keeping games development motoring

BUILD SPECIAL FEATURE: DISCOVERY AND DISTRIBUTION
With more new platforms to consider than ever before, the discoverability challenge is greater than ever. Experts offer insight into getting your game noticed

REGION FOCUS: CANADA

EVENTS:
GDC, San Francisco – March 25th to 29th

APRIL 2013

LOCALISATION SPECIAL
With an increasingly sophisticated global marketplace, the pressure is higher than ever to reach audiences in their first language. We speak to the firms making that happen

REGIONAL FOCUS: CHINA

EVENTS:
Festival of Games, The Netherlands – April 23th to 25th

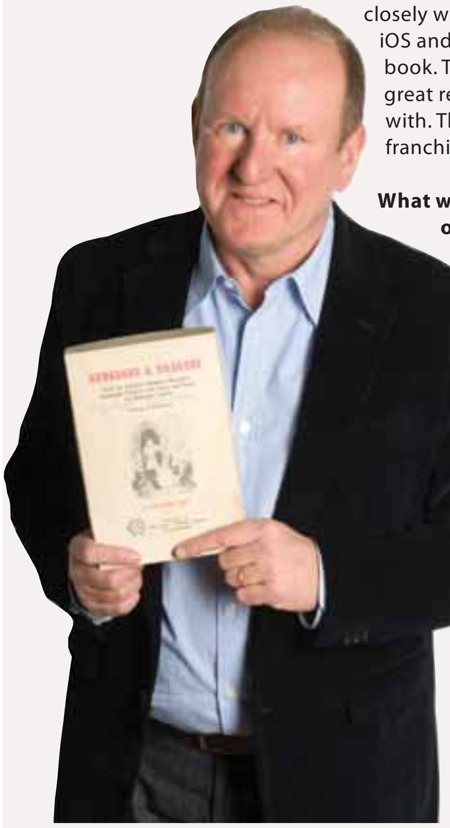
EDITORIAL enquiries should go through to Will.Freeman@intentmedia.co.uk, or call him on 01992 515303

To discuss **ADVERTISING** contact Alex.Boucher@intentmedia.co.uk, or call him on 01992 535647

amiqus
recruitment specialists
for the games industry

THE FAQ PAGE: IAN LIVINGSTONE

Develop grills respected figures from the global games industry



Creator of the Fighting Fantasy series and life president of Eidos, Ian Livingstone (below), has over one thousand board games, some of which he has designed himself

Who are you and what do you do?
My name is Ian Livingstone and I like to play and make games.

What are you working on right now?
Wearing my Square Enix and Eidos hat, I tend to put my fingers in everybody else's pies and try to add value to the key franchises, particularly *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider* and *Hitman*. But I've also been helping some indies recently, notably Playdemic, which produced social game *Gourmet Ranch*, and I've been working with them on their new title, *Kingdom Quest*, and also a social mobile game called *Eye Spy!*

And on a personal front, after two years of writing I launched a new *Fighting Fantasy* game book back in August called *Blood of the Zombies*. And then I've been working very closely with Tin Man Games on the iOS and Android versions of the book. That's been getting some great reviews that I'm delighted with. There's life in the old franchise yet.

What was the first video game or product that you ever worked on in the industry?
You're testing my memory there. I worked with the developers of *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* and *The Forest of Doom* Commodore 64 and Spectrum games. From my own creative standpoint, I worked on the storyline and most of the game design for Domark's initial product, which was called *Eureka*, in 1984.

What was the first video game you ever played, and did you enjoy it?
I had a Commodore PET in the late 1970s, but I can't remember any particular game and they were probably all rubbish. I fondly remember playing *Utopia* on the Intellivision in the early 1980s.

What was the most recent video game you ever played, and did you enjoy it?
That would be *FIFA 13*, being beaten by my son as I'm useless at it.

> ***"Having launched D&D in Europe, I have to think what World of Warcraft would be like without the grandaddy of all fantasy role-playing games."***

What is your favourite game ever, and for what reason?
That's like asking which is my favourite child. There's so many games for so many different experiences, from playing for five immersive hours on console or snacking on an iPad. It's impossible to say.

In your view, what area of the industry needs more 'investment'?
A successful games industry needs high skills or low costs, and that hasn't always been the case in the UK. All that is changing though, and I'm particularly proud of the success we've had with the Next Gen review, and the fact that we've managed to inspire Michael Gove to take the current programme of ICT and replace it with curriculum with computer science at its core. That could be transformational for us.

What do you enjoy about the video games industry today?
It's the creativity, and the fact that today content creators can reach global audiences. It's also the cooperation in the games industry and the camaraderie. It's a unique industry and it's not ego driven like the other entertainment industries.

What disappoints you about the video games industry today?
It's been inward-looking for far too long. What we've achieved we should be very proud of. The industry has failed to engage itself enough, to my mind, with the mass market media in a way that has our achievments as an industry reported in a positive way with respect.

Of all the games you have worked on, which has been your favourite to work on?
I'd have to say *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider*. Even though I wasn't part of the design team, Core were just amazing then. We used to have lots of meetings about that game, and I'd like to think I helped in some way.

What game that you weren't involved with would you most liked to have worked on?
It would have to be *World of Warcraft*. Me being such a *Dungeons & Dragons* fan, and having helped launch *D&D* in 1975 in Europe, I have to think what *World of Warcraft* would be like without the grandaddy of all fantasy role-playing games.

What other video games developer do you most admire?
There's so many. Crystal Dynamics, Bethesda, BioWare, Naughty Dog, Rockstar North, Valve, Id, IO Interactive and Eidos Montreal are making tremendous stuff, and then there's all the indies, like Mojang and what Notch has done with *Minecraft*.

What hobbies, collections or interests do you have that are completely unrelated to video games?
There's board games, which aren't so unrelated to video games. I've over one thousand of them. I love playing and designing board games. I also love writing, playing golf and sailing.

amiqus Discover a global network of talent today at **amiqus.com**

develop
THE INTERNATIONAL MONTHLY FOR
GAMES PROGRAMMERS, ARTISTS,
MUSICIANS AND PRODUCERS

Editor-in-Chief
Michael French
michael.french@intentmedia.co.uk

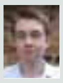
Staff Writer
Aaron Lee
aaron.lee@intentmedia.co.uk

Design
Sam Richwood
sam.richwood@intentmedia.co.uk

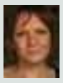
Editor
Will Freeman
will.freeman@intentmedia.co.uk

Sales Manager
Alex Boucher
alex.boucher@intentmedia.co.uk

Publisher
Stuart Dinsey
stuart.dinsey@intentmedia.co.uk


Staff Writer
Craig Chapple
craig.chapple@intentmedia.co.uk

Production Manager
Kelly Jones
kelly.jones@intentmedia.co.uk


Managing Editor
Lisa Carter
lisa.carter@intentmedia.co.uk

Contributors
Lauri Antalainen, Chris Backler, David Bailey, John Broomhall, Cat Burton, John Gaudiosi, Nick Gibson, Tim Heaton, Will Luton, Jude Ower, Mark Rein, Fee Stewart, Alex Tutty, Jo Twist, Trevor Williams, Richard Wilson

intentmedia
Intent Media is a member of the
Periodical Publishers Associations

CIRCULATION IS OVER 8,000

Tel: 01992 535646 **Fax:** 01992 535648 **Web:** www.develop-online.net

Develop Magazine. Saxon House, 6a St. Andrew Street. Hertford, Hertfordshire. SG14 1JA
ISSN: 1365-7240 © Intent Media 2012 No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means without prior permission of the copyright owners. Printed by The Manson Group, AL3 6PZ

Subscription **UK: £35 Europe: £50 Rest of World: £70**
Enquiries, please email: dev.subscriptions@c-cms.com Tel: 01580 883 848

Charges cover 11 issues and 1st class postage or airmail dispatch for overseas subscribers

Develop is published 11 times a year, reaching 8,000 readers throughout the UK and international market

Lecturer in Games Animation

£28,401 - £31,948

Could you teach students to produce imaginative creative work like this? If you have the skills and expertise, and the right mix of industry and teaching experience, you could inspire our talented students to produce award-winning creative work and move on to successful careers.

Come to Teesside to teach in our high quality professional level games studios, with Skillset-accredited programmes. We're serious about games – we encourage our staff to research and to keep up their industry links. Andrew Oliver, of Blitz Games, says: 'I believe Teesside University has one of the most proactive games courses in Britain'.

Find out more www.tees.ac.uk/sections/jobs

Please quote reference number: A6407
Closing date: 30 November 2012 12 noon

Teesside University
Inspiring success

TEACH THIS!

(Image by David Bailey - 2nd Year Student)

Wish you were here!
alex

NOW HIRING

Superstars

A HOTSHOT
Technical Artist

A SHAMELESSLY AWESOME
World Designer

A MAGICALLY MASTERFUL
Gameplay Programmer
WHO DESIGNS!

APPLY NOW

Mm

Media Molecule
@mediamolecule
mediamolecule.com/jobs